THE CHRISTIANS PATTERN;

Or

A DIVINE TREATISE Of the IMITATION Of CHRIST.

Written Originally in Latine.

By THOMAS of KEMPIS, above 200. Years since.

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TO THE READER.

AMongſt the many Conſiderations *which clearly evince the great* Worth *and ſpecial* Excellencies *of this divine* Treatiſe, *ſuch as* Theſe, *would not be unremembred.*

That it hath been tranſlated into very many languages, viz. Greek, Italian, French, Spaniſh, Dutch, Engliſh, *&c. Some Travellers affirm they have ſeen it alſo in the* Turkiſh *language. And in moſt of theſe languages, as well as in the Latin in which originally it was written, it hath been very often printed; Scarce hath any other Practical and Devotional Diſcourſe been publiſhed oftner; And that with ſo general an approbation and acceptance; This golden* Manuel *having had the ſingular happineſs and priviledge to be kindly entertained by Chriſtians of different denominations.*

But that which doth fully ſpeak the true Worth *and* Excellency *of it, is*

the main Design *and* Scope, *the* Matter *and* Argument *of the Book, being indeed the very same with the Intendment and Design of the Gospel, the Scope and End of Christianity, which in short, is*, The being transformed into the Image of Christ, *or, in our Author's language,* the Imitation *or* Following of Christ *in Humility, Patience, Benignity and Goodness, entire Self-resignation to the will of God, &c. In these and the like particulars doth the Author place our Resemblance of Christ, which yet are not here spoken to in a formal Method, but are scattered through this Treatise, yet so as to be easily observed by a serious Reader.*

Now there is nothing more precious, more dear to God than his own Image, his own life; from the which Wicked men are said to be estranged, Ephes. 4. *And there is nothing higher, nothing more excellent than the* Participation *of the* Divine Nature, *than the Resemblance of God who is the first and Supreme Excellency, than the* Imitation

ration of Christ *who is the higheſt, the moſt perfect and lovely Pattern and* Idea *of all purity and holineſs. Beſides there is nothing more eſſential to the conſtituting of a true Chriſtian, than the denying of himſelf, the taking up of his Croſs, and following of Chriſt. All along in this Treatiſe there are to be found the ſeeds and principles of the moſt neceſſary and Practical Truths, together with many inward and experimental diſcoveries of the* Kingdom of God in us, *and the Proceſs of Regeneration: ſo that a ſerious Chriſtian may meet with that which will be very proper & ſuitable to him to conſider and make uſe of, in the ſeveral exerciſes of his Chriſtian warfare. The truth of this is faithfully witneſſed to by many religious and holy Souls, who have profeſt that in the reading of this Spiritual Book, they have found that which hath been (through the goodneſs of God) very profitable to direct and inſtruct, to revive and comfort, to ſtrengthen and eſtabliſh them in their preſent ſtate and condition.*

The Author of this Treatise was a serious and diligent Observer of the Kingdom of God within him, and speaks of the inward things of Religion, as one that did carefully mind the power and Energy of Truth in his own soul,

And now what remains, but to add humble and hearty desires to the God of all Grace, the Father of Lights, that he would prepare good and honest hearts, *for the receiving of those Truths which so mainly concern* Life *and* Godliness: *and that it may please him so to prosper what is here written of the true* Imitation of Christ, *as that they that read, may be formed into the likeness of Christ and follow his steps; that being in the world as He was in the world, and being changed into his Image from glory to glory, They may at last be with him where he is, and behold the glory which God hath given him, and so for ever be with the Lord.*

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THE FIRST BOOK.

CHAP. I.

Of the Imitation of Christ, and contempt of all worldly vanities.

HE *that followeth me, walketh not in darkneſs*, ſaith the Lord. Theſe are the words of Chriſt by which we are admoniſhed, that we ought to imitate his life and manners, if we will be truly inlightned, and be delivered from all blindneſs of heart. Let therefore our chiefeſt endeavour be to meditate upon the life of Jeſus Chriſt.

2. The doctrine of Chriſt exceedeth all the doctrines of holy men; and he that hath the Spirit, will find therein an hidden Manna. But it falleth out, that many, who often hear the Goſpel of Chriſt, are yet but little affected, becauſe they are void of the ſpirit of Chriſt. But whoſoever will fully and feelingly underſtand the words of Chriſt, muſt endeavour to conform his life wholly to *the life of* Chriſt.

3. What will it avail thee to diſpute profoundly of the Trinity, if thou be void of humility, and art thereby diſpleaſing to the Trinity? High words ſurely make a man neither holy nor juſt, but a virtuous life maketh him dear to God.

I had rather feel Compunction, than underſtand the definition thereof. If thou didſt know the whole Bible, and the ſayings of all the Philoſophers by heart, what would all that profit thee without the love of God and without grace? Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity, but to love God, and to ſerve him only. This is the higheſt wiſdom, by contempt of the world to tend towards the Kingdom of heaven.

4. It is therefore vanity to ſeek after periſhing riches, and to truſt in them. It is alſo vanity to hunt after honours, and to climbe to high degree. It is vanity to follow the deſires of the fleſh, and to labour for that, for which thou mayeſt afterwards ſuffer more grievous puniſhment. Vanity it is to wiſh to live long, and to be careleſs to live well. It is vanity to mind only this preſent life, and not to foreſee thoſe things which are to come. It is vanity to ſet thy love on that which ſpeedily paſſeth away, and not to haſten thither, where everlaſting joy is permanent.

5. Call often to mind that proverb, *That the eye is not ſatisfied with ſeeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.* Endeavour therefore to withdraw thy heart from the love of viſible things, and to turn thy ſelf to the inviſible. For they that follow their ſenſuality, do ſtain their own conſciences, and loſe the favour of God.

CHA

CHAP.

Of the humble conceit of our ſelves.

ALL men naturally deſire to know: but what availeth knowledge without the fear of God? Surely, an humble husbandman that ſerveth God, is better than a proud Philoſopher that neglecting himſelf laboureth to underſtand the courſe of the heavens. Who ſo knoweth himſelf well, groweth more mean in his own conceit, and delighteth not in the praiſes of men.. If I underſtood all things in the world, and were not in charity; what would that help me in the ſight of God, who will judge me according to my deeds?

2. Ceaſe from an inordinate deſire of knowing, for therein is much diſtraction and deceit. The learned are willing to ſeem ſo to others, and to be accounted wiſe. There be many things, which to know doth little or nothing profit the ſoul: and he is very unwiſe, that is intent upon other things than thoſe that may avail him for the welfare of his ſoul. Many words do not ſatisfie the Soul; but a good life comforteth the mind, and a pure conſcience giveth great aſſurance in the ſight of God.

3. How much the more thou knoweſt, and how much the better thou underſtandeſt, ſo much the more grievouſly

ſhalt thou therefore be judged, unleſs thy life be altogether more holy. Be not therefore extolled in thine own mind for any Art or Science *which thou knoweſt*, but rather let the knowledg given thee, make thee more humble and cautious. If thou thinkeſt that thou underſtandeſt and knoweſt much; know alſo that there be many things more which thou knoweſt not. Affect not to be overwiſe, but rather acknowledge thine own ignorance. Why wilt thou prefer thy ſelf before others, ſith there be many more learned and skilful in the Scripture than thou? If thou wilt know or learn any thing profitably; deſire to be unknown, and to be little eſteemed of *by man*.

4. The higheſt and moſt profitable reading is the true knowledg and conſideration of our ſelves. It is great wiſdom and perfection to eſteem nothing of our ſelves, and to think always well and highly of others. If thou ſhould ſee another openly ſin, or commit ſome hainous offence, yet oughteſt thou not to eſteem the better of thy ſelf: for thou knoweſt not how long thou ſhalt be able to remain in good eſtate. We are all frail, but thou oughteſt to eſteem none more frail than thy ſelf.

CHAP.

CHAP. II[illegible]

Of the doctrine of truth,

HAppy is he whom Truth by it ſelf doth teach, not by figures and words that paſs away; but as it is in its ſelf. Our own opinion and our own ſenſe do often deceive us, and it diſcerns little. What availeth it to cavil *and diſpute* about dark and hidden things; whereas for being ignorant of them we ſhall not be ſo much as reproved at the day of judgment? It is a great folly to neglect the things that are profitable and neceſſary and give our minds to that which is curious and hurtful: we have eyes and ſee not.

2. And what have we to do with *Genus* and *Species, the dry notions of Logicians?* He to whom the Eternal Word ſpeaketh, is delivered from a world of unneceſſary conceptions. From that one Word are all things, and all ſpeak that one: and this is the Beginning, which alſo ſpeaketh unto us. No man without that *Word* underſtandeth or judgeth rightly. He to whom all things are one, he who reduceth all things to one, and ſeeth all things in one; may enjoy a quiet mind, and remain peaceable in God. O God, who art the Truth, make me one with thee in everlaſting charity. It is tedious to me often to read and hear many things: in thee is all that I would have

and can desire. Let all Doctors hold their peace; let all creatures be silent in thy sight; Speak thou alone unto me.

3. How much the more one is united within himself, and becometh inwardly simple *and pure*, so much the more and higher things doth he understand without labour: for that he receiveth intellectual light from above. A pure, sincere, and stable spirit is not distracted, *though it be employed* in many works: for that, it works all to the honour of God, and inwardly being still and quiet, seeks not it self in any thing it doth. Who hinders and troubles thee more than the unmortified affectious of thine own heart? A good and godly man first of all disposeth within himself those things which he is outwardly to act: neither do they draw him to the desires of an inordinate inclination, but he ordereth them according to the prescript of right reason. Who hath a greater combat, than he that laboureth to overcome himself? This ought to be our endeavour, to conquer our selves, and daily to wax stronger and to make a further growth in holiness.

4. All perfection in this life hath some imperfection mixt with it: and no knowledge of ours is without some darkness. An humble knowledge of thy self is a surer way to God, than a deep search after learning: yet learning is not

not to be blamed, nor the more knowledge of any thing whatsoever, to be disliked, it being good in it self, and ordained by God, but a good conscience and a vertuous life is always to be preferred before it. But because many endeavour rather to get knowledge, than to live well; therefore they are often deceived, and reap either none, or very slender profit *of their labours.*

5. O, if men bestowed as much labour in the rooting out of vices, and planting of vertues, as they do in moving of questions! neither would there so much hurt be done, nor so great scandal be given in the world; nor so much looseness be practised in religious houses. Truly, at the day of judgment we shall not be examined, what we have read, but what we have done: not how well we have spoken, but how religiously we have lived. Tell me now, where are all those Doctors and Masters, with whom thou wast well acquainted, whilst they lived and flourished in learning? Now others possess their livings, and perhaps do scarce ever think of them. In their life-time they seemed something, but now they are not spoken of.

6. O, how quickly doth the glory of the world pass away! O that their life had been answerable to their learning! then had their study and reading been to good purpose. How many perish in this

world by reason of vain-learning, who take little care of the serving of God? And because they rather choose to be great than humble, therefore they become vain in their imaginations. He is truly great that is great in charity. He is truly great, that is little in himself, and that maketh no account of any height of honour. He is truly wise, that accounteth all earthly things as dung, that he may gain Christ. And he is truly learned, that doeth the will of God, and forsaketh his own will.

CHAP. IV.

Of wisdom and providence in our actions.

WE must not give ear to every saying or suggestion, but ought warily and leisurely to ponder things according to *the will of* God. But (alas) such is our weakness that we rather often believe, and speak evil of others than good. Those that are perfect men do not easily give credit to every thing one tells them; for they know that humane frailty is prone to evil, and very subject to fail in words.

2. It is great wisdom not to be rash in thy proceedings, nor to stand stiffely in thine own conceits; as also not to believe every thing which thou heareſt, not presently to relate again to others, what thou hast heard or dost believe. Consult with

with him that is wise, and conscientious. and seek to be instructed by better than thy self, rather than to follow thine own inventions. A good life maketh a man wise according to God, and giveth him experience in many things. How much the humbler one is in himself, and more subject *and resigned* unto God; so much the more prudent shall he be in all his affairs, and enjoy greater peace and quiet of heart.

CHAP. V.

Of the reading of holy Scriptures.

TRuth, not eloquence, is to be sought for in holy Scripture. Each part of the Scripture is to be read with the same Spirit wherewith it was written. We should rather search after *our spiritual* profit in the Scriptures, than subtilty of speech. We ought to read plain and devout books as willingly as high and profound. Let not the authority of the Writer offend thee, whether he be of great or small learning; but let the love of pure truth draw thee to read. Search not who spake this or that, but mark what is spoken.

2. Men pass away; but the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever. God speaks unto us sundry ways, without respect of persons. Our own curiosity often hindreth us in reading of the Scriptures,

when as we will examine and diſcuſs that which we ſhould rather paſs over without more adoe. If thou deſire to reap profit, read humbly, plainly, and faithfully: never deſire the eſtimation of learning: Inquire willingly, and hear with ſilence the words of holy men: diſlike not the parables of the Elders, for they are not recounted without cauſe.

CHAP. VI.

Of inordinate affections.

WHenſoever a man deſireth any thing inordinately, he is preſently diſquieted in himſelf. The proud and covetous can never reſt. The poor and humble in ſpirit live together in all peace. The man that is not yet perfectly dead to himſelf, is quickly tempted and overcome in ſmall and trifling things. The weak in ſpirit, and he that is yet in a manner carnal and prone to ſenſible things, can hardly withdraw himſelf altogether from earthly deſires. And therefore he is often afflicted, when he goeth about to withdraw himſelf from them: and eaſily falleth into indignation, when any oppoſition is made againſt him.

2. And if he hath followed therein his appetite, he is preſently diſquieted with remorſe of conſcience; for that he yielded to his paſſion which profiteth him

him nothing to the obtaining of the peace he ſought: or. The quietneſs of heart therefore is gotten by reſiſting our paſſions, not by obeying them. There is no peace in the heart of a carnal man, nor of him, that is addicted to outward things, but in the ſpiritual and ſervent man.

CHAP. VII.

Of flying vain hope and pride.

HE is vain that putteth his truſt in man or creatures. Be not aſhamed to ſerve others for the love of Jeſus Chriſt; nor to be eſteemed poor in this world. Preſume not upon thy ſelf, but place thy hope in God. Do what lieth in thy power, and God will aſſiſt thy good affection. Truſt not in thine own knowledge, nor in the ſubtilty of any living creature: but rather in the grace of God, who helpeth the humble, and humbleth thoſe that are ſelf-preſuming.

2. Glory not in wealth if thou have it, nor in friends becauſe potent; but in God who giveth all things, and above all deſireth to give thee himſelf. Extol not thy ſelf for the bigneſs or beauty of thy body, which is diſſolved and diſfigured with a little ſickneſs. Take not pleaſure in thy natural gifts or wit, leſt thereby thou diſpleaſe God, to whom appertaineth all the good whatſoever thou haſt by nature.

3. Esteem not thy self better than others, lest perhaps in the sight of God, who knoweth what is in man, thou be accounted worse than they. Be not proud of wel-doing: for the judgment of God is far different from the judgment of men, and that often offendeth him which pleaseth them. If there be any good in thee, believe that there is much more in others, that so thou mayest conserve humility with thee. It is no prejudice unto thee to debase thy self under all men: but it is very prejudicial to thee to prefer thy self before any one man. The humble enjoy continual peace: but in the heart of the proud is envy and frequent indignation.

CHAP. VIII.

That too much familiarity is to be shunned.

LAy not thy heart open to every one; but treat of the affairs with the wise and such as fear God. Converse not much with young people and strangers. Flatter not the rich; neither do thou appear willingly before great personages. Keep company with the humble and plain ones, with the devout, and vertuous; and confer with them of those things that may edifie. Be not familiar with any woman; but in general commend all good women to God. Desire to be

to be familiar with God alone and his Angels, and fly the knowledge of men.

2. We must have charity towards all, but familiarity *with all* is not expedient. Sometimes it falleth out, that a person unknown to us, is much esteemed of, from the good report given him by others; whose presence notwithstanding is not grateful to the eyes of the beholders. We think sometimes to please others by our company, and we rather distaste them with those bad qualities which they discover in us.

CHAP. IX.

Of obedience and subjection.

IT is a great matter to live in obedience, to be under a superiour, and not to be at our own disposing. It is much safer to obey, than to govern. Many live under obedience, rather for necessity than for charity: such are discontented, and do easily repine *& murmur*. Neither can they attain to freedom of mind, unless they willingly and heartily put themselves under obedience for the love of God. Go whither thou wilt, thou shalt find no rest, but in humble subjection under the government of a Superiour. The imagination and change of places have deceived many.

2. True it is, that every one willingly doth that which agreeth with his own sense *and liking*; and is apt to affect those mo[st]

moſt that are of [illegible]'s owu mind: But if God be among [illegible]s, we muſt ſometimes for peace ſake ceaſe to adhere to our own opinion. Who is ſo wiſe that he can fully know all things? Truſt not therefore to thine own opinion; but be willing to hear the judgment of others. If that which thou thinkeſt be not amiſs, and yet thou ſubmitteſt it for God, and followeſt the opinion of another, it ſhall be better for thee.

3. I have often heard, that it is ſafer to hear and take counſel, than to give it It may alſo fall out, that each ones opinion may be good: but to refuſe to yield to others when as reaſon or cauſe requireth it, is a ſign of pride and ſtiffneſs.

CHAP. X.

Of the avoiding ſuperfluity in words.

FLy the tumultuouſneſs of the world as much as thou canſt: for the talk of worldly affairs hindereth very much, although they be recounted with ſincere intention; for we are quickly defiled, and enthralled with vanity. I could wiſh that I had oftentimes held my peace, when I have ſpoken; and that I had not been in company. Why do we ſo willingly ſpeak and talk one with another, when notwithſtanding we ſeldome return to ſilence without hurt of conſcience? The cauſe why we ſo willingly talk,

talk, is for that by discoursing one with another, we seek to receive comfort one of another, and desire to ease our mind overwearied with sundry thoughts: and we very willingly talk and think of those things which we most love and desire; or of those which we feel most contrary and troublesom unto us.

2. But alas, oftentimes in vain, and to no end: for this outward comfort is the cause of no small loss of inward and divine consolation. Therefore we must watch and pray, lest our time pass away idlely. If it be lawful and expedient for thee to speak, speak those things that may edifie. An evil custom and neglect of our own good doth give too much liberty to inconsiderate speech: Yet religious discourses of spiritual things do greatly further our spiritual growth, especially where persons of one mind and spirit be gathered together in God.

CHAP. XI.

Of the obtaining of peace, and zealous desire of profit in grace.

WE might enjoy much peace, if we would not busie our selves with the words and deeds of other men, which appertain nothing to our charge. How can he live long in peace, that trusteth himself in the cares of others, that seeks occasion abroad, that little or seldom recol-

collecteth himself within in his own breast? Blessed are the single-hearted; for they shall injoy much peace.

2. What is the reason, why some of the Saints were so perfect and contemplative? Because they laboured to mortifie themselves wholly to all earthly desires: and therefore they could with their whole heart give themselves to God, and be free for holy retirement. We are too much led by our own passions, and too solicitous for transitory things. We also seldome overcome any one vice perfectly, and are not inflamed with a fervent desire to grow better every day: and therefore we remain cold and scarce warm in Religion.

3. If we were perfectly dead unto our selves, and not entangled within our own breasts; then should we taste divine things, and have some acquaintance with heavenly enjoyments. The greatest and indeed the whole impediment is, for that we are not disentangled from our passions and lusts, neither do we endeavour to enter into that path of perfection, which the Saints have walked before us: and when any small adversity befalleth us, we are too quickly dejected, and turn our selves to humane comforts.

4. If we would endeavour like men of courage to stand in the battel; surely we should feel the favourable assistance

of

of God from heaven. He who giveth us occaſion to fight, to the end we may get the victory, is ready to ſuccour thoſe that fight *manfully*, and do truſt in his grace. If we eſteem our progreſs in religious life to conſiſt only in ſome exteriour obſervances, our devotion will quickly be at an end. But let us lay the Axe to the root, that being freed from paſſions, we may find reſt to our ſouls.

5. If every year we would root out one vice, we ſhould ſooner become perfect men. But now oftentimes we perceive it goes contrary. and that we were better and purer at the beginning of our converſion, than after many years of our profeſſion. Our fervour and profiting ſhould increaſe daily; but now it is accounted a great matter, if one can retain but ſome part of his firſt zeal. If we would but a little force our ſelves at the beginning, then ſhould we be able to perform all things afterwards with eaſe and delight.

6. It is a hard matter to leave that to which we are accuſtomed, but harder to go againſt our own wills. But if thou doſt not overcome little and eaſie things, how wilt thou overcome harder things? Reſiſt thy inclination in the very beginning, and unlearn evil cuſtomes, leſt perhaps by little and little they draw thee to greater difficulty. O, if thou didſt but conſider how much inward peace

peace unto thy self, and joy unto others thou shoulst procure by demeaning thy self well, I suppose thou wouldst be more careful of thy spiritual profiting.

CHAP. XII.

Of the profit of adversity.

IT is good that we have sometimes some troubles and crosses: for they often make a man enter into himself, and consider that he is here in banishment, and ought not to place his trust in any worldly thing. It is good that we be sometimes contradicted; and that there be an evil or a lessening conceit had of us: and this, although we do and intend well. These things help often to the attaining of humility, and defend us from vain glory: for then we chiefly seek God for our inward witness, when outwardly we be contemned by men, and when there is no credit given unto us.

2. And therefore a man should settle himself so fully in God, that he need not to seek many comforts of men. When a good man is afflicted, tempted, or troubled with evil thoughts; then he understandeth better the great need he hath of God, without whom he perceiveth he can do nothing that is good. Then also he sorroweth, lamenteth, and prayeth by reason of the miseries he suffereth. Then he is weary of living longer,

ger, and wisheth that death would come, that he might be dissolved and be with Christ. Then also he well perceiveth, that perfect security and full peace cannot be had in this world.

CHAP. XIII.

Of resisting temptations.

SO long as we live in this world we cannot be without tribulation and temptation; for as it is written in *Job*. The life of man is a warfare upon earth. Every one therefore ought to be careful about his temptations, and to watch in prayer, lest the devil find an advantage to deceive him; who never sleepeth, but goeth about seeking whom he may devour. No man is so perfect and holy, but hath sometimes temptations: and we cannot be altogether without them.

2. Temptations are often profitable to men, though they be troublesome and grievous: for in them man is humbled, purged, and instructed. All the Saints have passed and profited through many tribulations and temptations; and they that could not bear temptations, became reprobate and fell away. There is no order so holy, nor place so secret, where there be not temptations or adversities.

3. There is no man that is altogether free from temprations whiles he liveth on earth: for in our selves is the root thereof,

thereof, being born with inclination to evil. When one temptation or tribulation goeth away, another cometh, and we shall ever have something to suffer, because we are fallen from the state of our felicity. Many seek to flie temptations, and do fall more grievously into them. By flight alone we cannot overcome, but by patience and true humility we become stronger than all our enemies.

4. He that only avoideth them outwardly, and doth not pluck them up by the roots, shall profit little: yea temptations will the sooner return unto him, and he shall feel himself in a worse case than before. By little & little, and by patience with longanimity (through Gods help) thou shalt more easily overcome, than with violence and thine own importunity. Often take counsel in temptations: and deal not roughly with him that is tempted; but give him comfort as thou wouldst wish to be done to thy self.

5. The beginning of all evil temptations is inconstancy of mind, and little confidence in God. For as a ship without a stern is tossed to and fro with the waves: so the man that is negligent, and leaveth his purpose is many wayes tempted. Fire trieth Iron, and temptation a just man. We know not oftentimes what we are able to do, but temptations

tations do shew us what we are. We must be watchful, especially in the beginning of the temptation; for the enemy is then more easily overcome, if he be not suffered to enter the door of our hearts, but be resisted without the gate at his first knock. Wherefore one said, *Obsta principiis*, &c. Withstand the beginnings, for an after-remedy comes often too late. First there cometh to the mind a bare cogitation of evil, then a strong imagination thereof, afterward delight and an evil motion, and then consent: and so by little and little our wicked enemy getteth entrance, whilst he is not resisted in the beginning. And how much the longer one is negligent in resisting, he becomes daily so much the weaker in himself, and the enemy stronger against him.

6. Some suffer greatest temptations in the beginning of their conversion; others in the latter end; others again are much troubled almost through the whole time of their life. Some are but easily tempted according to the wisdom and equity of the divine appointment, which weigheth the state and deserts of men, and ordaineth all things for the welfare of his chosen ones.

7. We ought not therefore to despair when we are tempted, but so much the more fervently to pray unto God, that he will vouchsafe to help us in all tribulations;

tions; who su[illegible], according to the word of S. *Paul*, will give with the temptation such issue, that we may be able to bear it. Let us therefore humble our selves under the hand of God in all temptations and tribulations, for he will save and exalt the humble in spitit.

8. In temptations and afflictions, man is proved how much he hath profited; and his reward is thereby the greater, and his graces do more eminently shine forth. Neither is it any such great thing if a man be devout and fervent, when he feeleth no affliction: but if in time of adversity he bear himself patiently, there is hope then of great proficiency in grace. Some are kept from great temptations, and are often overcome in small ones which do daily occurr; to the end that being humbled, they may never presume on themselves in great matters, who are baffled in so small things.

CHAP. XIV.

Of avoiding rash judgment.

TUrn thine eyes unto thy self, and beware thou judg not the deeds of other men. In judging of others a man laboureth in vain, often erreth, and easily sinneth; but in judging and discussing of himself, he always laboureth fruitfully. We often judge of things accor-

according as we fancy them; for private affections bereaves us often of true judgment. If God were always the pure intention of our desire, we should not be so much troubled, through the repugnance of our carnal mind.

2. But oftentimes something lurketh within, or else occurreth from without, which draweth us after it. Many secretly seek themselves in their actions, and know it not. They seem also to live in good peace of mind, when things are done according to their will and opinion; but if things succeed otherwise than they desire, they are straightwayes troubled and much afflicted. The diversities of judgments ad opinions, cause oftentimes dissentions between religious and devout persons, between friends and countrymen.

3. An old custome is hardly broken, and no man is willing to be led further than himself can see. If thou dost more rely upon thine own reason or industry, than upon that power which brings thee under the obedience of Jesus Christ, it will be long before thou become illuminated: for God will have us perfectly subject unto him and that being enflamed with his love, we transcend the narrow limits of humane reason.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

Of works done of Charity.

FOr no worldly thing, nor for the lo of any man, is any evil to be done but yet, for the profit of one that ſtande in need, a good work is ſometimes to b intermitted without any ſcruple, or chan ged alſo for a better. For by doing thi a good work is not loſt, but changed int a better. The exteriour work withou charity profiteth nothing; but whatſoeve is done of charity, be it never ſo little an contemptible in the ſight of the world, i becomes wholly fruitful. For God weigheth more with how much love one worketh, than how much he doeth. He doeth much, that loveth much.

2. He doeth much, that doeth a thing well: he doeth well that rather ſerveth the community, than his own proper will. Oftentimes it ſeemeth to be charity, and it is rather carnality; becauſe natural inclination, ſelf-will, hope of reward, and deſire of our own intereſt will ſeldom be away.

3. He that hath true and perfect charity, ſeeketh himſelf in nothing; but only deſireth in all things that the glory of God ſhould be exalted. He alſo envieth none; becauſe he affecteth no private good: neither will he rejoyce in himſelf; but wiſheth above all things to be made happy in the enjoyment of God.

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He attributeth nothing that is good to any man, but wholly referreth it unto God, from whom, as from the fountain, all things proceed; in whom finally all the Saints do reſt as in their higheſt fruition. O, he that had but one ſpark of true charity, would certainly diſcern that all earthly things be full of vanity.

CHAP. XVI.

Of bearing with the defects of others.

THoſe things that a man cannot amend in himſelf or in others, he ought to ſuffer patiently, until God order things otherwiſe. Think that perhaps it is better ſo for thy trial and patience, without which all good deeds are not much to be eſteemed. Thou oughteſt to pray notwithſtanding when thou haſt ſuch impediments, that God would vouchſafe to help thee, and that thou mayeſt bear them patiently.

2. If one that is once or twice warned will not give over, contend not with him: but commit all to God, that his will may be fulfilled, and his name honoured in all his ſervants, who well knoweth how to turn evil into good. Endeavour to be patient in bearing with the defects and infirmities of others, of what ſort ſoever they be; for that thy ſelf alſo haſt many things which muſt be ſuffered by others. If thou canſt not make thy ſelf ſuch an

one as thou wouldst, how canst thou
pect to have another in all things to
liking? We would willingly have ot
perfect, and yet we amend not our
faults.

3. We will have others severely c
rected, and will not be corrected
selves. The large liberty of others
pleaseth us: and yet we will not h
our desires denied us. We will h
others kept under by strict laws; but in
sort will our selves be restrained. A
thus it appeareth, how seldom we we
our neighbour in the same ballance w
our selves. If all men were perfect, wh
should we have to suffer of our nei
bour for God?

4. But now God hath thus ordered
that we may learn to bear one anot
burden: for no man is without fault
man but hath his burden, no man s
cient of himself, no man wise eno
of himself; but we ought to bear
one another, comfort one another, h
instruct, and admonish one another.
casions of adversity best discover
great virtue or strength each one h
for occasions make not a man frail,
do shew what he is.

CHAP. XVII.

Of a retired life.

THou must learn to break thy
will in many things, if thou

ave peace and concord with others. It no ſmall matter to dwell in a religious ommunity, and to converſe therein ithout complaint, and to perſevere herein faithfully until death. Bleſſed is e that hath lived well, and ended happily. If thou perſevere in grace as thou oughteſt, and profit in virtue, eſteem thy elf as a baniſhed man, and a pilgrim pon earth. Thou muſt be contented for hriſts ſake to be eſteemed as a fool in is world, if thou deſire to lead an holy ife.

2. The wearing of a religious habit, nd ſhaving of the crown, do little proit; but change of manners, and perfect mortification of paſſions, make a true religious man. He that ſeeketh any ing elſe but God, and the ſalvation of is ſoul, ſhall find nothing but tribulaon and ſorrow. Neither can he remain ong in peace, that laboureth not to be e leaſt, and ſubject to all.

3. Thou cameſt to ſerve, not to rule. now that thou waſt called to ſuffer and labour, not to be idle, or to ſpend thy me in talk. Here therefore men are roved as gold in the furnace. Here no an can ſtand, unleſs he humble himelf with his whole heart for the love of God.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of the examples of the holy Fathers.

CONsider the lively examples of the holy Fathers, in whom true perfection and religion shined; and thou shalt see how little it is, and almost nothing, which we do now in these days. Alas, what is our life if it be compared to them! The Saints and friends of Christ served the Lord in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness, in labour and weariness, in watchings and fastings, in prayer and holy meditations, in persecutions and many reproaches.

2. O how many and grievous tribulations suffered the Apostles, Martyrs, Confessours, Virgins, and all the rest that endeavoured to follow the steps of Christ! They hated their lives in this world, that they might possess their souls in everlasting life. O how strict and self-renouncing a life, led those holy Fathers in the wilderness! How long and grievous tentations suffered they! How often were they assaulted by the enemy! What frequent and fervent prayers offered they to God! How rigorous abstinence did they daily use! How great zeal and care had they of their spiritual proficiency! How strong a combat had they for the overcoming of their lusts! How pure and upright intentions kept they unto God! In the day

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they laboured, and in the night they attended to continual prayer: although when they laboured also, they ceased not from mental prayer.

3. They spent all their time with profit: every hour seemed short for the service of God: and by reason of the great sweetness they felt in contemplation, they forgot the necessity of corporal refreshments. They renounced all riches, dignities, honours, friends, and kinsfolk; they desired to have nothing which appertained to the world; they scarce took things necessary for the sustenance of life; they grieved to serve their bodies even in necessity. They were poor in earthly things, but very rich in grace and virtues. Outwardly they wanted, but inwardly were refreshed with grace and divine consolation.

4. They were strangers to the world, but near and familiar friends to God. They seemed to themselves as nothing, and despicable to this present world: but they were precious and beloved in the eyes of God. They were grounded in true humility, lived in simple obedience, walked in love and patience: and therefore they profited daily in spirit, and obtained great greace in Gods sight. They were given for an example to all religious men; and they should more provoke us to endeavour after spiritual proficiencies, than the number of

the lukewarm rivers should prevail make us remiss.

5. O how great was the fervour of religious persons in the beginning their holy institution! How great their devotion to prayer! What ambition to excel others in virtue! How exact discipline then flourished! How great reverence and obedience under the rule of their Superiours, observed they in all things! Their footsteps yet remaining do testifie that they were indeed holy and perfect men, who fighting valiantly trodd the world under their feet. Now he is greatly accounted of that transgresseth not, and that can with patience endure that which he hath undertaken.

6. O the coldness and negligence of our times! that we so quickly decline from our first fervour, and are come to that pass, that very sloth and coldness of spirit maketh our own life tedious unto us. Would to God the desire to profit in virtue did not wholly sleep in thee, who hast often seen the many examples of devout and religious persons.

CHAP. XIX.

Of the exercise of a good and religious person.

THe life of a good and religious person ought to be adorned with all virtues: that he may inwardly be such

such as outwardly he seemeth to men. And with reason thou ought'st to be much more within, than is preceived without: For God beholdeth us, whom we ought most highly to reverence whereſoever we are, and walk in purity like Angels in his ſight. Daily ſhould we renew our purpoſes, and ſtir up our ſelves to fervour, as though this were the firſt day of our converſion; and to ſay; Help me my God in this my good purpoſe, and in thy holy ſervice; and grant that I may now this day begin perfectly: for that which I have done hitherto is nothing.

2. According to our purpoſe ſhall be the ſucceſs of our ſpiritual profiting; and much diligence is neceſſary to him that will profit much. And if he that firmly purpoſeth often faileth, what ſhall he do that ſeldome purpoſeth any thing, or with little reſolvedneſs: It may fall out ſundry ways that we leave offour purpoſe: and the light omiſſion of *ſpiritual* exerciſes ſeldome paſſes without ſome loſs *to our ſouls*. The purpoſe of juſt men depends upon Gods grace, & not upon their own wiſdom; upon whom they always rely for whatſoever they take in hand. For man doth purpoſe, but God doth diſpoſe: neither is the way of man in himſelf.

3. If an accuſtomed exerciſe be ſometimes omitted, either for ſome act of piety, or profit to my brother; it may ea-

sily afterwards be recovered again. If out of a slothful mind, or out of carelesnes we lightly forsake the same, it is a great offence against God, and will be found to be prejudicial to our selves. Let us do the best we can, we shall easily fail in many things; yet must we always purpose some certain course, and especially against those vices which do most of all molest us. We must diligently search into, and set in order both the outward and the inward man, because both of them are expedient to our coming forward in godlines.

4. If thou canst not continually recollect thy self, yet do it sometimes, at the least once a day, to wit, at morning or at night. In the morning fix thy good purpose; and at night examine thy self what thou hast done, how thou hast behaved thy self in thought, word, and deed; for in these perhaps thou hast often offended both God and thy neighbour. Gird thy loyns like a man against the vile assaults of the devil; bridle thy riotous appetite, and thou shalt be the better able to keep under all the unruly motions of the flesh. Be thou at no time idle altogether, but either reading, or writing, or praying, or meditating, or endeavouring something for the publick good. As for bodily exercises they must be used with great discretion, neither are they to be practised of all men a like.

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5. The exercises that are not common are not to be exposed to public view; for things private are practised more safely at home. Nevertheless thou must beware thou neglect not that which is common, and be more ready for what is private. But having fully and faithfully accomplished all thou art bound and enjoyned to do, if thou hast any spare time, betake thee to thy self, as thy devotion shall require. All cannot use one kind of exercise, but one is more convenient for this person, another for that; according to the seasonableness of times also, divers exercises are fitting. Some suite better with us on working days, other on holy days: some we have need of in the time of temptation, and of others in time of peace and quietness. Some we mind when we are pensive, and other some when we rejoyce in the Lord.

6. When chief Festivals draw near, good exercises are to be renewed, and the prayers of holy men more fervently to be implored. From feast to feast we should make some good purpose, as though we were then to depart out of this world, and to come to the everlasting feast *in Heaven*. Therefore ought we carefully to prepare our selves at holy times, and to live more devoutly, and to keep more exactly all things that we are to observe, as though we were shortly at Gods hands to receive the reward of our labours.

7. But if it be deferred, let us think with our selves that we are not sufficiently prepared, and unworthy yet of so great glory, which shall be revealed in us in due time; and let us endeavour to prepare our selves better for our departure. *Blessed is that servant* (saith St. Luke the Evangelist) *whom when his Lord cometh he shall find watching; Verily I say to you, he shall make him ruler over all his goods.*

CHAP. XX.

Of the love of solitude and silence.

SEek a convenient time to retire into thy self, and meditate often upon Gods benefits. Meddle not with curiosities; but read such things which may rather yield compunction to thy heart, than busy thy head. If thou wilt withdraw thy self from speaking vainly and from gadding idlely, as also from harkening after novelties and rumours, thou shalt find leisure sufficient enough to meditate on good things. The greatest Saints avoided the society of men when they could conveniently, and did rather choose to serve God, and to live to God, in secret.

2. One said, As oft as I have been among men, I returned home less a man than I was before: and this we find true, when we talk long together. It is easier not to speak a word at all, than not to speak more words than we should: It is

It is easier for a man to keep home than to keep himself well when he is abroad. He therefore that intends to attain to the more inward and spiritual things of Religion, must with Jesus depart from the multitude and press of people. No man safely doth go abroad, but he which gladly can abide at home: no man speaks securely: but he that holds his peace willingly. No man ruleth safely, but he that is ruled willingly: no man securely doth command, but he that hath learned readily to obey.

3. No man rejoyceth securely, unless he hath within him the testimony of a good conscience; and yet the security of the Saints was alwayes full of the fear of God. Neither were they less careful and humble in themselves, for that they shined outwardly with grace and great virtues. But the security of the wicked riseth out of pride and presumption, and in the end it deceiveth them. Although thou seem to be a good religious man, or a devout Hermite, yet promise not thy self security in this life.

4. Oftentimes those have fallen into greatest danger by overmuch self-confidence, who have been in greatest esteem and account amongst men. Wherefore it is more profitable to many not to be altogether free from temptations, but to be often assaulted, lest they should be too secure, and so perhaps be puffed

puffed up with pride; or too freely give themselves to wordly comforts. O how good a conscience should he keep, that would never seek after transitory joy, nor entangle himself with the things of this world? O how great peace and quietness should he possess, that would cut of all vain sollicitude, and think onely upon divine things, and such as are profitable for his soul, and would place all his confidence in God!

5. No man is worthy of heavenly comfort, unless he have diligently exercised himself in holy compunction. If thou desirest true contrition of heart, enter into thy closet, and shut out the tumults of the world, as it is written, In your chambers be ye grieved. In thy closet thou shalt find what abroad thou shalt often lose; the more thou visitest thy closet, the more thou wilt like it; the less thou comest thereunto, the more thou wilt loth it. If in the beginning of thy amendment thou art content to remain in it, and keep it well, it will afterwards be to thee a dear friend, and a most pleasant comfort.

6. In silence and in stillness a religious soul advantageth her self and learneth the mysteries of holy Scripture. There she findeth rivers of tears, wherein she may every night wash and cleanse her self; that she may be so much the more familiar with her Creator, by how much

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the further off she liveth from all world-
ly disquiet. Whoso therefore withdraw-
eth himself from his acquaintance and
friends, God with his holy Angels will
draw near unto him. It is better for a
man to live privately and to have regard
to himself, than to neglect his soul,
though he could work wonders in the
world. It is very commendable in a re-
ligious person seldom to go abroad, and
to be unwilling to see others.

7. Why art thou desirous to see that,
which is unlawful for thee to enjoy? for
the world passeth away and the lusts
thereof. Our sensual desires draw us to
rove abroad: but when the time is past,
what carriest thou home with thee but a
burdened conscience and a distracted
heart? A merry going out bringeth com-
monly a mournful return home; and a
joyful evening makes *many times* a sad
morning. So all carnal joy enters gent-
ly, but in the end it bites and stings to
death. What canst thou see else-where,
which thou canst not see here? behold
the heaven and the earth and all the
elements; for of these are all things
created.

8. What canst thou see any where that
can long continue under the Sun? Thou
thinkest perchance to satiate thy self, but
thou canst never attain it. Shouldst thou
see all things present before thine eyes,
what were it but a vain *and unprofitable*

ſight? Lift up thine eyes to God in the higheſt, and pray him to pardon all thy ſins and negligencies. Leave vain things to the vain, but be thou intent upon thoſe things which God commandeth thee. Shut thy door upon thee, and call unto thee Jeſus thy beloved. Stay with him in thy cloſet; for thou ſhalt not find ſo great peace any where elſe. Hadſt thou not gone abroad and hearkened to idle rumours, thou mighteſt the better have enjoyed quietneſs. But ſith thou delighteſt ſometimes to hear novelties, it is fit thou ſuffer for it ſome unquietneſs of mind.

CHAP. XXI.

Of compunction of heart.

IF thou wilt make any progreſs in godlineſs, keep thy ſelf in the fear of God, and affect not too much liberty. Keep in aw all thy ſenſes under *the ſevere rod of* diſcipline, and give not thy ſelf over to fooliſh mirth. Give thy ſelf to compunction of heart, and thou ſhalt gain much devotion thereby: compunction bringeth much good, which diſſoluteneſs is wont quickly to deſtroy. It is a wonder that any man can ever perfectly rejoyce in this life, if he duly conſider his baniſhment, and throughly weigh the many perils wherewith his ſoul is invironed.

2. The levity of our minds and the little care we have of our faults, maketh us insensible of the sorrows of our souls; but oftentimes we vainly laugh, when we have just cause to weep. There is no true liberty nor right gladness, but in the fear of God accompanied with a good conscience. Happy is he that can avoid all distracting impediments, and bring himself to the union of holy compunction. Happy is he that can abandon all that may defile or burthen his conscience. Resist manfully: one custome overcometh another. If thou canst let others alone in their matters, they likewise shall not hinder thee in thine.

3. Busie not thy self in matters, which appertain to others; neither do thou trouble thy self with the affairs of thy Betters. Still have an eye to thy self first, and be sure more especially to instruct thy self, before all thy loving friends. If thou hast not the favour of men, be not grieved at it; but take this to heart, that thou dost not carry thy self so warily and circumspectly, as it becometh the servant of God, and a devout religious man. It is better oftentimes and safer that a man hath not many consolations in this life, especially such as are agreeable to the flesh. But that we have not at all or do very seldom taste divine consolations, the fault is ours, because we seek not after compunction of heart,

heart, nor do altogether forsake the vain and outward comforts *of this world.*

4. Know that thou art unworthy of divine consolation, and that thou hast rather deserved much tribulation. When a man hath perfect contrition, then is the whole world grievous and bitter unto him. A good man findeth alwayes sufficient cause of mourning and weeping; for whether he consider his own or his neighbours estate, he knoweth that none liveth here without tribulation. And by how much a man looks narrowly into himself, by so much the more he sorroweth. Our sins and wickednesses, wherein we are so enwrapt, that we can seldome apply our selves to heavenly contemplations, do minister unto us matter of most just sorrow and inward compunction.

5. Didst thou oftner think of thy death, than of thy living long, there is no question but thou wouldst be more careful to amend. I believe thou wouldst willingly undergo any labour or sorrow in this world, and not be afraid of the greatest austerity, if thou didst consider within thy self the infernal pains in the other world. But because these things enter not to the heart, and we still love those things only that delight us, therefore it is that we remain very dull and cold in religion.

6. It is often our want of spirit which maketh

maketh our miſerable body ſo eaſily complain. Pray therefore unto the Lord with all humility, that he will vouchſafe to give thee the ſpirit of compunction. And ſay with the Prophet, Pſal. 80. *Feed me, O Lord, with the bread of tears, and give me plenteouſneſs of tears to drink.*

CHAP. XXII.

Of the conſideration of humane miſery.

MIſerable thou art whereſoever thou be, or whitherſoever thou turneſt, unleſs thou turn thy ſelf unto God. Why art thou troubled, when things ſucceed not as thou wouldeſt or deſireſt? for who is he that hath all things according to his mind? Neither I nor thou, nor any man upon earth; there is none in this world, be he King or Pope, without ſome tribulation or other. Who is then in the beſt caſe *or condition?* even he who can ſuffer ſomething for God.

2. Many weak and infirm ones can ſay, Behold what an happy life hath ſuch an one, how wealthy, how great he is, in how great power and dignity! But lift up thine eyes to the riches of heaven, and thou ſhalt ſee that all the goods of this life are nothing ſo to be accounted of. They are very uncertain, rather burdenſome than otherwiſe, becauſe they are never enjoyed without carefulneſs and fear. Mans happineſs conſiſteth not in having

having abundance of wealth, but a mean estate should content him; it is truly misery enough even to live upon the earth. The more a man would be spiritual, the more bitter to him is this present life; because he seeth more clearly and perceiveth more sensibly the defects of humane corruption. For to eat and to drink, to sleep and to watch, to labour and to rest, and to be subject to other necessities of nature is doubtless a great misery and affliction to a religious man, that would gladly be free and delivered from all sin.

3. For the inward man is much oppressed with these *outward and corporal* necessities whilest we live in this world. Therefore the holy Prophet prayeth with great devotion to be delivered from them, saying, *Bring me, O Lord, out of my necessities.* But wo be to them that know not their own misery; and a greater wo to them that love this miserable and corruptible life. And some there be that so much dote upon it, that although with great labour and pains they can scarce get mere necessaries, yet could they live here always, they would care nothing at all for the kingdom of heaven.

4. O how foolish are these and faithless in their hearts, who lye so deeply sunk in the earth, that they can mind or relish nothing but carnal things! But miserable wretches as they are, they shall in the

the end feel to their coſt how vile and how nothing that was which they loved: Whereas the Saints of God, and all the devout friends of Chriſt reſpected not thoſe things which pleaſed the fleſh, and which flouriſhed in this life, but longed for the everlaſting riches with their whole hope and deſire. Their whole deſire was carried upward to things durable and inviſible, that the deſire of things viſible might not draw them to things below. O brother, loſe not thy hope of coming forward in godlineſs; there is yet time, the hour is not yet paſt.

5. Why wilt thou deferr thy good purpoſe from day to day? Ariſe and begin in this very inſtant, and ſay, Now is the time to be doing, now is the time to be ſtriving, now is the beſt time to amend my ſelf. When thou art ill at eaſe and much troubled, then is the time of deſerving beſt; thou muſt paſs through fire and water before thou comeſt to the place of refreſhing. Unleſs thou doſt earneſtly force thy ſelf, thou ſhalt never get the victory over ſin: ſo long as we carry about us this frail body of ours, we can never be without trouble and ſorrow. We would gladly be quiet and freed from all miſery, but ſeeing by ſin we have loſt our innocency, we have together with that loſt alſo the true felicity. Therefore it becomes us to have patience, and to wait for the mercy of God,

God, till this our iniquity be put away and this mortality of ours be ſwallowed up of life.

6. O how great is humane frailty which is always prone to evil? to day thou confeſſeſt thy ſins, and to morrow thou committeſt the very ſame thou haſt confeſſed. Now thou art purpoſed to look well unto thy ways, and within a while thou ſo behaveſt thy ſelf, as though thou hadſt never any ſuch purpoſe at all. Good cauſe have we therefore to humble our ſelves, and never to have any great conceit of our ſelves, becauſe we are ſo frail and ſo inconſtant. Beſides, that may quickly be loſt by our own negligence, which by the grace of God and our own great pains we have ſcarce at length obtained.

7. What will become of us in the end, who begin to wax cold ſo timely? Woe be unto us, if we will ſo give our ſelves unto eaſe, as if all were in peace and ſafety, when as yet there appeareth no ſign of true holineſs in our converſations! We have need like young beginners to be newly inſtructed again to a good life, if happily there be any hope of our future amendment and proficiency in ſpiritual things.

CHAP. XXIII.

Of the meditation of Death.

THere will very quickly be an end of thee here, therefore ſee what will become

become of thee hereafter. To day a man, to morrow none; and out of ſight, out of mind. O the ſtupidity and hardneſs of mans heart, who thinketh only upon the preſent, & hath no more care of what is to come! Thou ſhouldeſt ſo order thy ſelf in all thy thoughts & actions, as if to day, yea this very moment, thou wert ready to depart. Hadſt thou a clear conſcience, thou wouldſt not greatly fear death. It were better to avoid ſin, than to fly death. If thou art not prepared to day, how wilt thou be prepared to morrow? To morrow is uncertain, and how knoweſt thou that thou ſhalt live till to morrow?

2. What availeth it to live long, when we are ſo little the better by *long living?* Alas! length of days doth oftner make our ſins the greater, than our lives the better. O that we had ſpent but one day well in this world! Many there are who count how long it is ſince their converſion; and yet full ſlender oftentimes is the fruit of amendment of life. If to die be accounted dreadful, to live long may perhaps prove more dangerous. Happy is he that always hath the hour of his death before his eyes, and daily prepareth himſelf for to die. If at any time thou haſt ſeen another man die, make account thou muſt alſo paſs the ſame way.

3. When it is morning, think thou mayeſt

mayeſt die before night, and when eve
ing comes, dare not to promiſe thy ſe
the next morning. Be thou therefo
alwayes in a readineſs, and ſo lead th
life that death may never take thee un
prepared. Many die ſuddenly and whe
they look not for it: for the Son of ma
will come when we think not of hi
coming. When that laſt hour ſhall come
thou wilt begin to have a far differen
opinion of thy whole life that is paſt, an
be exceeding ſorry thou haſt been ſ
careleſs and remiſs.

4. O how wiſe and happy is he tha
now laboureth to be ſuch an one in hi
life, as he wiſheth to be found at the hou
of his death! A perfect contempt of th
world, a fervent deſire to go forward i
vertue, the love of diſcipline, the painfu
neſs of repentance, the readineſs of obe
dience, the denying of our ſelves, an
the bearing any affliction for the love o
Chriſt patiently, will give us great con
fidence we ſhall die happily. Whil
thou art in health thou mayſt do much
good, but when thou art ſick, I ſee no
what thou art able to do. Few by ſickne
grow better and more reformed; as alſ
they who wander much abroad, ſeldom
thereby become holy.

5. Truſt not to friends and kindred,
neither do thou put off the care of th
ſouls welfare till hereafter; for men wil
ſooner forget thee, than thou art awar
of

of. It is better to look to it be-time, and do ſome good before-hand, than to truſt to other mens courteſies. If thou beeſt not careful for thy ſelf now, who will be careful for thee hereafter? The time that is now preſent is very precious, now are the dayes of ſalvation, now is the acceptable time. But alas! that thou ſhouldſt ſpend thy time ſo idlely here, where thou mighteſt purchaſe to live eternally hereafter. The time will come when thou ſhalt deſire one day or hour to amend in, and I cannot ſay that it will be granted thee.

6. O beloved, from how great danger mightſt thou deliver thy ſelf! from how great fear free thy ſelf, if thou wouldſt be alwayes mindful of death? Labour now to live ſo, that at the hour of death thou mayſt rather rejoyce than fear: learn now to dye to the world, that thou mayſt then begin to live with Chriſt. Learn now to contemn all *earthly* things, that thou mayſt freely go to Chriſt. Chaſtiſe thy body now by repentance, that thou mayſt then have aſſured confidence.

7. Ah fool, why doſt thou think to live long, when thou canſt not promiſe to thy ſelf one day? How many have been deceived and ſuddenly ſnatcht away? How often doſt thou hear theſe reports, Such a man is ſlain, another man is drowned, a third breaks his neck with a fall from ſome

ſome high place, this man dieth eating
and that man playing? One periſhed by
fire, another by the ſword, another of the
plague, another was ſlain by thieves.
Thus death is the end of all, and man's
life ſuddenly paſſeth away like a
ſhaddow.

8. Who ſhall remember thee when
thou art Dead? Do, do now, my beloved
whatſoever thou art able to do: for thou
knoweſt not when thou ſhalt die, nor yet
what ſhall befall thee after thy death.
Now whilſt thou haſt time heap unto thy-
ſelf everlaſting riches, think on nothing
but the ſalvation of thy ſoul, care for
nothing but the things of God. Make
now friends to thy ſelf by honouring the
Saints of God, and imitating their
actions, that when thou faileſt in this
ſhort life, they may receive thee into
everlaſting habitations.

9. Keep thy ſelf as a ſtranger and pil-
grim upon the earth, and as one to
whom the affairs of this world do
nothing appertain. Keep thy heart free
and lifted up to God, becauſe thou haſt
here no abiding city. Send thither thy
daily prayers and ſighs together with
thy tears, that after death thy ſpirit may
with much happineſs paſs to the Lord.
Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIV.

Of Judgment, and the punishment of Sins.

IN all things have a special aim to thy end, and how thou wilt be able to stand before that severe Judge to whom nothing is hid, who is not pacified with gifts, nor admitteth any excuses, but will judge according to right and equity. O wretched and foolish sinner, who sometimes feareſt the countenance of an angry man; what answer wilt thou make to God who knoweth all thy wickedness! Why dost thou not provide for thy self against that great day of judgment: when no man can excuse or answer for another, but every one shall have enough to answer for himself! Now are thy pains profitable, thy tears acceptable, thy groans audible, thy grief pacifieth God, and purgeth thy soul.

2. The patient man hath a great and wholesome purgatory, who though he receive injuries, yet grieveth more for the malice of another, than for his own wrongs: who prayeth willingly for his adversaries, and from his heart forgiveth their offences, he delayeth not to ask forgiveness of whomsoever he hath offended; he is sooner moved to compassion than to anger; he often offereth *an holy* violence to himself, and labours to bring the body wholly into sub-

jection to the spirit. It is better to purge
out our sins, and cut of our vices here
than to keep them to be punished here-
after. Verily we do but deceive our-
selves through an inordinate love of the
flesh.

3. What is it that that infernal fire
feeds upon, but thy sins? The more thou
sparest thy self now and followest the
flesh, so much the more hereafter shall
be thy punishment, and thou storest up
greater fewel for that flame. In what
thing a man hath sinned, in the same
shall he be the more grievously punished.
There shall the slothful be pricked for-
ward with burning goads and the glut-
tons be tormented with great hunger
and thirst. There shall the luxurious
and lovers of pleasures be bathed in
burning pitch and stinking brimstone,
and the envious like mad-dogs shall
howl for very grief.

2, There is no sin but shall have its
proper torment. There the proud shall
be filled with all confusion: the co-
vetous shall be pinched with miserable
penury: one hour of pain there shall be
more bitter than a thousand years of the
sharpest pennance here. There is no
quiet, no comfort for the damned there;
yet here we have some intermission of
our labours, and enjoy the comfort of
our friends. Be now sollicitous and sor-
rowful because of thy sins, that at the
da-

day of judgment thou mayſt be ſecure with the company of bleſſed ſouls. For then ſhall the righteous with great boldneſs ſtand againſt ſuch as have vexed and oppreſſed them; then ſhall he ſtand to judge men, who doth now humbly ſubmit himſelf to the cenſure of men. Then ſhall the poor and humble have great confidence, but the proud man ſhall be compaſſed with fear on every ſide.

5. Then will it appear that he was wiſe in this world, who had learned for Chriſt to be a fool and deſpiſed. Then ſhall every affliction patiently undergone delight us, when the mouth of iniquity ſhall be ſtopped up. Then ſhall the devout rejoyce, and the profane ſhall mourn. Then ſhall he more rejoyce that hath beat down his own fleſh, than he that hath abounded in all pleaſure and delight. Then ſhall the poor attire ſhine glorioufly, and the precious robes ſeem vile and contemptible. Then ſhall be more commended the poor cottage, than the gilded palace. Then wil conſtant patience more avail us, than all earthly power. Then ſimple obedience ſhall be preferred before all wordly wiſdom.

6. Then ſhall a good and clear conſcience more rejoyce a man than the profound *learning of* philoſophy. Then ſhall the contempt of riches weigh more

than all the worldlings treaſure. Then wilt thou be more comforted that thou haſt prayed devoutly, than that thou haſt fared daintily. Then wilt thou be more glad thou haſt kept ſilence, than that thou haſt talked much. Then will good works avail more than many goodly words. Then a ſtrict life and ſevere repentance will be more pleaſing than all earthly delights. Accuſtome thy ſelf now to ſuffer a little, that thou mayeſt then be delivered from more grievous pains. Prove firſt here what thou canſt endure hereafter. If now thou canſt endure ſo little, how wilt thou then be able to endure perpetual torments? If now a little ſuffering make thee ſo impatient, what will hell fire do hereafter? Aſſure thy ſelf thou canſt not have two Paradiſes, it is impoſſible to enjoy delights in this world, and after that to reign with Chriſt.

7. Suppoſe thou haſt hitherto lived alwayes in honours and delights, what would all this avail thee, if thou wert to die at this inſtant? All therefore is vanity, but to love God and ſerve him only. For he that loveth God with all his heart, is neither afraid of death nor puniſhment, nor of judgement, nor of hell: for perfect love gives ſecure acceſs to God. But he that takes delight in ſin, what marvel is it if he be afraid, both of death and judgement? Yet it is good, although

though love be not yet of force to withhold thee from ſin, that at leaſt the fear of hell ſhould reſtrain thee. But he that layeth aſide the fear of God, can never continue long in good eſtate, but falleth quickly into the ſnares of the devil.

CHAP. XXV.

Of the zealous amendment of our whole life.

BE watchful and diligent in the ſervice of God, and often bethink thy ſelf wherefore thou cameſt hither, and why thou haſt left the world. Was is not that thou mightſt live to God, and become a ſpiritual man? Be fervent then to come forward, for ſhortly thou ſhalt receive a reward of thy Labours; there ſhall not be then any fear of ſorrow in thy coaſts. Labour but now a little, and thou ſhalt find great reſt, yea perpetual joy *to thy ſoul*. If thou continueſt faithful and fervent in doing *good*, no doubt but God will be faithful and liberal in rewarding thee. Thou oughtſt to have a good hope for getting the victory; but thou muſt not be ſecure leſt thou wax either negligent or proud.

2. When one that was in great anxiety of mind, often wavering between fear and hope, did once, being oppreſſed with grief, humbly proſtrate himſelf in a Church in prayer, and ſaid within himſelf, *O, if I knew that I ſhould yet perſe-*

vere! he presently heard within him an answer from God, which said, *What if thou didst know it, what wouldst thou do? Do now what thou wouldst do then, and thou shalt be secure.* And being herewith comforted and strenthened, he committed himself wholly to the will of God, and that noysome anxiety ceased: neither had he any mind to search curiously any further, to know what should befal him; but rather laboured to understand what was the perfect and acceptable will of God, for the beginning and accomplishing of every good work.

3. Hope in the Lord, and do good, saith the Prophet, and inhabit the land, & thou shalt be fed with the riches thereof. One thing there is that draweth many back from a spiritual progress, and the diligent amendment of their lives; *viz.* the horrour of the difficulty, or the labour of the combat. But they above others improve most in virtue, that endeavour most to overcome those things which are grievous and contrary unto them. For there a man improveth more and obtaineth greater grace, where he more overcometh himself & mortifieth himself in spirit.

4. But all men have not alike, to overcome and mortifie, yet he that is zealous and diligent, though he have more passions, shall profit more in vertue: than another that is of a more temperate disposition,

ſition, if he be leſs fervent in the purſuit of virtue. Two things eſpecially much further our amendment, to wit, to withdraw our ſelves violently from that to which nature is viciouſly inclined, and to labour earneſtly for that virtue which we moſt want. Be careful alſo to avoid with great diligence thoſe things in thy ſelf, which do commonly diſpleaſe thee in others.

5. Gather ſome profit to thy ſoul whereſoever thou be; ſo as if thou ſeeſt or heareſt of any good examples, ſtir up thy ſelf to the imitation thereof. But if thou ſeeſt any thing worthy of reproof, beware thou do not the ſame. And if at any time thou haſt done it, labour quickly to amend it. As thine eye obſerveth others, ſo art thou alſo noted again by others. O how ſweet and pleaſant a thing it is, to ſee the ſervants of Chriſt fervent and devout, endued with virtuous and decent manners! And on the contrary, How pitiful and grievous a thing it is, to ſee them that live in a diſſolute and diſordered ſort, not applying themſelves to that for which they are called! O how hurtful a thing it is, to neglect the good purpoſes of their vocation, and to buſie themſelves in that which is not committed to their care!

6. Be mindful of the profeſſion thou haſt made, and have always before the eyes of thy ſoul the remembrance of thy

Saviour crucified. Thou hast go
cause to be ashamed looking upon t
life of Jesus Christ, seeing thou hast
yet no more endeavoured to confor
thy self unto him, though thou ha
walked a long time in the way of God
A religious person that exerciseth him
self seriously, and devoutly in the mo
holy life and passion of our Lord, sha
there abundantly find whatsoever is ne
cessary and profitable for him; neithe
shall he need to seek any better thing, ou
of Jesus. O, if Jesus crucified woul
come into our hearts, how quickly an
fully should we be instructed *in all truth*

7. A fervent religious person taket
and beareth all well that is commande
him: but he that is negligent and cold
hath tribulation upon tribulation, and on
all sides is afflicted: for he is void of in-
ward consolation, and is forbidden to
seek external comforts. A religious per-
son that liveth not according to disci-
pline, lies open to great mischief to the
ruine of his soul. He that seeketh liber-
ty and ease, shall ever live in disquiet: for
one thing or other will displease him.

8. O that we had nothing else to do,
but always with our mouth, and whole
heart to praise our Lord God! O that
thou mightest never have need to eat,
nor drink, nor sleep; but mightest always
praise God, and only employ thy self in
spiritual exercises: thou shouldst then
be

be much more happy than now thou art, when for ſo many neceſſities thou art conſtrained to ſerve thy body. Would God theſe neceſſities were not at all, but only the ſpiritual reflections of the ſoul, which, alas, we taſte of too ſeldom.

9. When a man cometh to that eſtate, that he ſeeketh not his comfort from any creature, then doth he begin perfectly to reliſh God. Then ſhall he be contented with whatſoever doth befal him in this world. Then ſhall he neither rejoyce in great matters, nor be ſorrowful for ſmall; but entirely and confidently commit himſelf to God, who ſhall be unto him all in all, to whom nothing doth periſh, nor die, but all things do live unto him, and ſerve him at a beck without delay.

10. Remember always thy end, and how that time loſt never returns. Without care and diligence thou ſhalt never get virtue. If thou beginneſt to wax cold, it will be evil with thee; but if thou give thy ſelf to fervour *of ſpirit*, thou ſhalt find much peace, and feel leſs labour, through the aſſiſtance of Gods grace, and love of virtue. The fervent and diligent man is prepared for all things. It is harder to reſiſt vices and paſſions, than to toil in bodily labours. He that avoideth not ſmall faults, by little and little falleth into greater. Thou wilt always rejoyce in the evening, if

thou ſpend the day profitably. Be watchful over thy ſelf, ſtir up thy ſelf, warn thy ſelf, and whatſoever becomes of others neglect not thy ſelf. The more *holy* violence thou uſeſt againſt thy ſelf, the more ſhall be thy *ſpiritual* profiting. *Amen.*

THE SECOND BOOK.

CHAP. I.

Of the inward life.

THE *Kingdom of God is within you*, ſaith the Lord. Turn thee with thy whole heart unto the Lord, and forſake this wretched world, and thy ſoul ſhall find reſt. Learn to deſpiſe exteriour things, and to give thy ſelf to the interiour, and thou ſhalt perceive the kingdom of God to come into thee. *For the kingdom of God is peace, and joy in the holy Ghoſt*, which is not given to the wicked. Chriſt will come into thee, and ſhew thee his conſolations, if thou prepare for him a worthy manſion within thee. All his glory and beauty is within, and there he pleaſeth himſelf. The inward man he often viſits; and hath with him ſweet diſcourſes, pleaſant ſolace, much peace, wonderful familiarity.

2. O faithful ſoul, make ready thy heart

heart for this bridegroom, that he may vouchſafe to come unto thee, and dwell within thee. For he ſaith, *If any love me, he will keep my words, and we will come unto him, and will make our abode with him.* Give therefore admittance unto Chriſt, and deny entrance to all others. When thou haſt Chriſt, thou art rich, and he will ſuffice thee. He will be thy faithful and provident helper in all things, ſo as thou ſhalt not need to truſt in men. For men are ſoon changed, and quickly fail, but Chriſt remaineth for ever, and ſtandeth firmly unto the end.

3. There is little truſt to be put in frail and mortal man, though he be profitable and dear unto thee: neither oughteſt thou much to be grieved, if ſometimes he croſs and contradict thee. They that to day take thy part, to morrow may be againſt thee, and ſo on the contrary, they often turn like unto the wind. Put all thy truſt in God, let him be thy fear, and thy love: He will anſwer for thee, and do in all things what is beſt. Thou haſt not here an abiding city; and whereſoever thou be, thou art a ſtranger and pilgrim: neither ſhalt thou ever have reſt, unleſs thou be moſt inwardly united unto Chriſt.

4. Why doſt thou here gaze about, ſince this is not the place of thy reſt? In heaven ought to be thy dwelling, and all earthly things are to be lookt upon

as it were by the way. All things pa
away, and thou together with them. Be
ware thou cleave not unto them, le
thou be entangled, and ſo doſt perih
Let thy thought be on the Higheſt, an
thy prayer directed unto Chriſt witho
ceaſing. If thou canſt not contemplat
high and heavenly things, reſt thy ſelf i
the paſſion of Chriſt, and dwell willing
ly in his holy wounds. For if thou fl
devoutly unto the wounds and precio
marks of the Lord Jeſus, thou ſhalt fee
great comfort in tribulation: neithe
wilt thou much care for being deſpiſe
of men, and wilt eaſily bear words o
detraction.

5. Chriſt was alſo in the world deſpiſe
of men, and in greateſt neceſſity, forſa
ken by his acquaintance and friends i
the midſt of ſlanders. Chriſt would
ſuffer and be deſpiſed; and dareſt thou
complain of any? Chriſt had adverſa
ries and backbiters; and wilt thou have
all men thy friends and benefactors?
For what ſhall thy patience be crowned,
if no adverſity happen unto thee? If thou
wilt ſuffer no adverſity, how wilt thou be
the friend of Chriſt? Suffer with Chriſt
and for Chriſt, if thou deſire to reign
with Chriſt

6. If thou hadſt but once perfectly
entred into the ſecrets of Jeſus, and
taſted a little of his ardent affection; then
wouldſt thou not weigh thine own com-
modity

modity or diſcommodity, but wouldſt rather rejoyce at ſlanders, when they ſhould chance to be caſt upon thee: for the love of Jeſus maketh a man to deſpiſe himſelf. A lover of Jeſus and of the truth, and a true inward Chriſtian and one free from inordinate affections, can freely turn himſelf unto God, and lift himſelf above himſelf in ſpirit, and with the greateſt enjoyment of his ſoul reſt in God.

7. He that judgeth of all things as they are, and not as they are ſaid and eſteemed to be, is truly wiſe, and taught rather by God than men. He that can live inwardly, and make ſmall reckoning of outward things, neither requireth places, nor attendeth times, for performing of religious exerciſes. A ſpiritual man quickly recollecteth himſelf becauſe he never poureth out himſelf wholly to outward things. He is not hindred by outward labour or buſineſs, which may be neceſſary for the time: but as things fall out, ſo he frameth himſelf unto them. He that hath well ordered and diſpoſed all things within, careth not for the ſtrange and perverſe carriages of men. So much is a man hindred and diſtracted, by how much he draweth *external* matters unto himſelf.

8. If all went well with thee, and if thou wert all purged, all things would fall out to thy good and advantage. But many

many things diſpleaſe and often trouble thee, becauſe thou art not yet perfectly dead unto thy ſelf, nor ſeparated from all earthly things. Nothing ſo defileth and intangleth the heart of man, as the impure love to creatures. If thou refuſe outward comfort, thou wilt be able to contemplate the things of heaven, and often receive internal joy.

CHAP. II.

Of humble ſubmiſſion.

RESpect not much who is with thee, or who is againſt thee: but endeavour and take care that God may be with thee in every thing thou doeſt. Have a good conſcience, & God will defend thee. For whom God will help, no malice of man can hurt. If thou canſt hold thy peace and ſuffer, without doubt thou ſhalt ſee that our Lord will help thee. He knoweth the time and manner how to deliver thee, and therefore thou oughteſt to reſign thy ſelf unto him. It belongs to God to help, and to deliver from all ſhame. Oftentimes it is very profitable for the keeping us more humble, that others know and reprehend our faults.

2. When a man humbleth himſelf for his faults, then he eaſily pacifieth others, and quickly ſatisfieth thoſe that are offended with him. God protecteth and delivereth the humble; he loveth and

and comforteth the humble, unto the humble man he enclineth himſelf; unto the humble he giveth great grace; and after his humiliation he raiſeth him unto glory. Unto the humble he revealeth his ſecrets, and ſweetly draweth and inviteth him unto himſelf. The humble perſon though he ſuffer ſhame, is yet in peace; for that he reſteth in God, and not in the world. Do not think that thou haſt profited any thing, unleſs thou eſteem thy ſelf inferiour to all.

CHAP. III.

Of a good and peaceable man.

FIrſt, keep thy ſelf in peace, and then mayſt thou pacifie others. A peaceable man doth more good than he that is well learned. A paſſionate man turneth even good into evil, and eaſily believeth the worſt. A good paceable man turneth all things into good. He that is well in peace, is not ſuſpicious of any. But he that is diſcontented and troubled, is toſſed with divers ſuſpicions: he is neither quiet himſelf, nor ſuffereth others to be quiet. He often ſpeaketh that which he ought not to ſpeak; and omitteth that which were more expedient for him to do. He conſidereth what others are bound to do; and neglecteth that which he is bound to himſelf. Firſt therefore have a careful zeal over thy ſelf,

ſelf, and then thou mayſt juſtly ſhew thy ſelf zealous alſo of thy neighbours good.

2. Thou knoweſt well how to excuſe thine own deeds, and thou wilt not receive the excuſes of others. It were more meet that thou didſt accuſe thy ſelf, and excuſedſt thy brother. If thou wilt be born withal, bear alſo with another. Behold how far off thou art yet from true charity and humility, which knoweth not how to be angry with any, or to be moved with indignation, but only againſt himſelf. It is no great matter to converſe with the good, and thoſe that are of a gentle diſpoſition; for that is naturally pleaſing to all, and every one willingly enjoyeth peace, and loveth thoſe beſt that agree with him. But to be able to live peaceably with unquiet, and perverſe men, or with the diſorderly, or ſuch as contradict us, is a great grace, and a very commendable and manly deed.

3. Some there are that keep themſelves in peace, and are in peace alſo with others. And there are ſome that neither are in peace themſelves, nor ſuffer others to be in peace. Some there are who are troubleſome to others, but always more troubleſome to themſelves. And others there are that keep themſelves in peace, and labour to bring others unto peace. Our whole peace in this miſerable life

conſiſteth rather in humble ſuffering, than in not feeling adverſities. He that can beſt tell how to ſuffer, will beſt keep himſelf in peace. He is a conquerour of himſelf, a Lord of the world, a friend of Chriſt, and heir of heaven.

CHAP. IV.

Of a pure mind, and upright intention.

WIth two wings man is lifted up from earthly vanities, that is, with *ſimplicity* and *purity*. Simplicity ought to be in our intention: Purity in our affections. Simplicity doth intend God: Purity doth apprehend and take him. No good action will hinder thee, if thou be inwardly free from all inordinate affection. If thou intend and ſeek nothing elſe but the will of God and the good of thy neighbour, thou ſhalt enjoy internal liberty. If thy heart were ſincere and upright, then every creature would be unto thee a looking glaſs of life, and a book of holy doctrine. There is no creature ſo little and abject that repreſenteth not the goodneſs of God.

2. If thou wert inwardly good and pure, then thou wouldeſt be well able to ſee and underſtand all things without any impediment. A pure heart penetrateth heaven and hell. Such as every one is inwardly, ſo he judgeth outwardly. If there be joy in the world, ſurely a man of a

of a pure heart poſſeſſeth it. And if there be any where tribulation and affliction an evil conſcience beſt feels it. As iron put into the fire loſeth its ruſt, and becometh all bright like fire, ſo he that wholly turneth himſelf unto God, is purged from all *foulneſs* and *ſlothfulneſs*, and is changed into a new man.

3. When one beginneth to wax cold, then he is afraid of a ſmall labour, and willingly receiveth external comfort. But when he once beginneth to overcome himſelf perfectly, and to walk manfully in the way of God; then he eſteemeth thoſe things to be light, which before ſeemed grievous nnto him.

CHAP. V.

Of the conſideration of ones ſelf.

WE cannot truſt much to our ſelves, for that grace oftentimes and underſtanding is wanting. There is but little light in us, and that which we have we quickly loſe by our negligence, and oftimes we do not perceive our own inward blindneſs. We often do evil, and excuſe it worſe. We are ſometimes moved with paſſion, and we think it to be Zeal. We reprehend ſmall things in others, and paſs over greater matters in our ſelves. We quickly feel and weigh what we ſuffer at the hands of others: but we

we mind not what others ſuffer from us. He that doth well, and rightly conſiders his own works, will find little cauſe to judg hardly of another.

2. The inward Chriſtian preferreth the care of himſelf before all other cares. And he that diligently attendeth unto himſelf, doth ſeldome ſpeak much of others. Thou wilt never be ſo inwardly religious, unleſs thou paſs over other mens matters with ſilence, & look eſpecially to thy ſelf. If thou attend wholly unto God and thy ſelf, thou wilt be little moved with whatſoever thou ſeeſt abroad. Where art thou, when thou art not with thy ſelf? And when thou haſt run over all, what haſt thou then profited, if thou haſt neglected thy ſelf? If thou deſireſt peace of mind and true union, thou muſt put all things behind thee, and look only upon thy ſelf.

3. Thou ſhalt therefore profit much, if thou keep thy ſelf free from all temporal cares. Thou ſhalt greatly decreaſe, if thou eſteem any thing of this world. Let nothing be great unto thee, nothing acceptable, but only God himſelf, or that which is of God. Eſteem all comfort vain which thou receiveſt from any creature. A ſoul that loveth God, deſpiſeth all things that be inferiour unto God. God alone is everlaſting, and of infinite greatneſs, filling all creatures: the ſouls ſolace, and the true joy of the heart.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of the joy of a good conſcience.

THe glory of a good man, is the teſtimony of a good conſcience. Have a good conſcience, and thou ſhalt ever have joy. A good conſcience is able to bear very much, and is very chearful in adverſities. An evil conſcience is always fearful and unquiet. Thou ſhalt reſt ſweetly, if thy heart do not reprehend thee. Do thou never rejoyce, but when thou haſt done well. Sinners have never true mirth, nor feel inward peace; becauſe *there is no peace to the wicked*, ſaith the Lord. And if they ſhould ſay, We are in peace, no evil ſhall fall upon us, and who ſhall dare to hurt us? believe them not; for upon a ſudden will ariſe the wrath of God, & their deeds ſhall be brought to nought, and their thoughts ſhall periſh.

2. To glory in tribulation is no hard thing for him that loveth; for to glory ſo, is to glory in the Croſs of our Lord. That glory is ſhort, which is given and received from men. Sorrow always accompanieth the glory of the world. The glory of the good is in their conſciences, and not in the tongues of men. The gladneſs of the juſt is of God, and in God: and their joy is of the truth. He that deſireth true and everlaſting glory, careth

careth not for that which paſſeth away with time. And he that ſeeketh temporal glory, or contemneth it not from his heart; ſheweth himſelf but little to eſteem of the glory of heaven. He enjoyeth great tranquillity and peace of mind, that careth neither for the praiſes, nor diſpraiſes of men.

3. He will eaſily be content and pacified, whoſe conſcience is pure. He is not the more holy, though thou commend him: nor the more abject, though thou depraiſe him. What thou art, that thou art: neither canſt thou be ſaid to be greater, than what thou art in the ſight of God. If thou conſider what thou art whithin thee, thou wilt not care what men ſay of thee. Man ſeeth in the face, but God looketh into the heart. Man conſidereth the deeds, but God weigheth the intention. To do always well, and to eſteem little of himſelf, is a ſign of an humble ſoul. To refuſe to be comforted by any creature, is a ſign of great purity, and inward confidence.

4. He that ſeeketh to witneſs for himſelf from without, doth ſhew that he hath wholly committed himſelf unto God. *For not he that commendeth himſelf, the ſame is approved* (ſaid bleſſed Paul) *but whom God commendeth.* To walk inwardly with God, and not be poſſeſſed with any outward affection, is the ſtate of a ſpiritual man.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Of the love of Jesus above all things.

BLessed is he that understandeth what it is to love Jesus, and to despise himself for Jesus. Thou oughtest to love thy beloved, for thy beloved; for that Jesus will be beloved alone above all things. The love of things created is deceitful and inconstant: the love of Jesus is faithful and constant. He that cleaveth unto creatures, shall fall with that which is subject to fall: He that embraceth Jesus, shall stand firmly for ever. Love him, and keep him for thy friend, who when all go away, will not forsake thee, nor suffer thee to perish in the end. Thou must once be left of all, whether thou wilt or no.

2. Keep close to Jesus both in life and death, and commit thy self unto his trust, who, when all fail, can alone help thee. Thy beloved is of that nature that he will not admit of a corrival; but will have thy heart alone, and sit like a King in his own throne. If thou couldest purge thy self perfectly of all creatures, Jesus would willingly dwell with thee. Whatsoever thou reposest in man out of Jesus, is all no better than lost. Trust not nor rely upon a reed full of wind: for that all flesh is grass, and all the glory thereof shall wither away as the flower of the field.

3. Tho

3. Thou ſhalt quickly be deceived, if thou look only to the outward ſhew of men. And if in them thou ſeekeſt thy comfort and profit, thou ſhalt often feel loſs. If thou ſeekeſt Jeſus in all things, thou ſhalt ſurely find Jeſus. But if thou ſeekeſt thy ſelf, thou ſhalt alſo find thy ſelf, but to thy own harm. For man doth more hurt himſelf if he ſeek not Jeſus, than the whole world and all his adverſaries could annoy him.

CHAP. VIII.

Of familiar converſation with Jeſus.

WHen Jeſus is preſent, all is well, and nothing ſeemeth difficult: but when Jeſus is abſent, every thing is hard. When Jeſus ſpeaketh not inwardly unto us, our comfort is nothing worth: but if Jeſus ſpeak but one word, we feel much conſolation. Did not Mary preſently riſe from the place where ſhe wept, when Martha ſaid unto her, *The maſter is come, and calleth for thee?* Happy is the hour when Jeſus calleth from tears to ſpiritual Joy. How dry and hard art thou without Jeſus! How fooliſh and vain, if thou deſire any thing out of Jeſus! Is not this a greater loſs, than if thou ſhouldeſt loſe the whole world?

2. What can the world profit thee without Jeſus? To be without Jeſus is a grievous hell; and to be with Jeſus is a ſweet

ſweet Paradiſe. If Jeſus be with thee, no enemy can hurt thee. He that findeth Jeſus, findeth a good treaſure, yea a good above all goods: And he that loſeth Jeſus loſeth too much, and more than the whole world. He is moſt poor that liveth with out Jeſus: and he is moſt rich that is well with Jeſus.

3. It is a piece of great skill to know how to converſe with Jeſus, and great wiſdom to know how to keep Jeſus. Be humble and peaceable, and Jeſus will be with thee. Be devout and quiet, and Jeſus will ſtay with thee. Thou mayeſt ſoon drive away Jeſus and loſe his grace, if thou turn aſide to outward things. And if thou ſhouldſt drive him from thee, and loſe him, unto whom wilt thou flie, and what friends wilt thou than ſeek? Without a friend thou canſt not well live: and if Jeſus be not above all a friend unto thee, thou ſhalt be too too ſorrowful and deſolate. Thou doeſt therefore fooliſhly, if thou doſt truſt or rejoyce in any other. It is better for thee to have all the world againſt thee, than Jeſus offended with thee. Amongſt all things therefore that be dear unto thee, let Jeſus alone be thy chiefeſt beloved.

4. Love all for Jeſus, but Jeſus for himſelf. Jeſus Chriſt alone is ſingularly to be beloved; who alone is found to be good and faithful above all friends. For him, and in him, let as well friends

friends as foes be dear unto thee, and all these are to be prayed for, that all may know and love him. Never desire to be singularly commended or beloved, for that appertaineth only unto God, who hath none like unto himself. Neither do thou desire that the heart of any should be set on thee, nor do thou set thy heart on the love of any but let Jesus be in thee, and in every good man.

5. Be pure and free within, and intangle not thy heart with any creature. Thou oughtest to be as it were naked, and to carry a pure heart to God, if thou wouldest be free to consider and see how sweet the Lord is. And truly, unless thou be prevented and drawn by his grace, thou shalt never attain to that happiness to forsake and cast off all, that thou alone mayst be united to him alone. For when the grace of God cometh unto a man, than he is made able for all things. And when it goeth away, he is poor and weak, and as it were left only unto the lash and scourge of every adversary. In this thou oughtest not to be dejected, nor despair; but to resign thy self with all indifferency unto the will of God, and to bear all things that befal thee for the glory of Christ: for after winter followeth summer, after night cometh day, and after a tempest, fair weather.

CHAP. IX.

Of the want of all comfort.

IT is no hard matter to despise huma comfort, when we have divine. B much and very much, to be able to w both humane and divine comfort; a for the glory of God, to be willing to e dure desolation of heart; and to se himself in nothing, nor to regard h own merit. What great matter is it, thou be cheerful and devout at t coming of grace? This hour is wish for of all men. He rideth easily enou whom the grace of God carrieth. A what marvel if he feel not his burde who is born up by the Almighty, a led by the soveraign guide?

2. We are alwayes willing to ha something for our comfort: and a m doth hardly put off *and forsake* himse The holy martyr St. Laurence overca the world with his Prelats because despised whatsoever seemed delightf in the world, and for the love of Ch patiently suffered Sixtus to be tak from him, whom he most dearly lov He overcame therefore the love of m by the love of the Creatour; and he ther chose the divine good pleasure, t humane comfort. See thou also le to forsake some necessary thing, an beloved friend, for the love of God.

not grieved when thou art forsaken by a friend, knowing that we all at length must be separated one from another.

3. A man must fight long, and mightily with himself, before he get the full victory over himself, and be able to draw his whole heart in to God. When a man trusteth in himself, he easily slideth unto humane comforts, but a true lover of Christ, and a diligent follower of virtue, betakes not himself to *humane* comforts, nor seeketh such sensible sweetnesles, but rather hard exercises, and to sustain great labours for Christ.

4. When therefore spiritual comfort is given thee from God, receive it thankfully: but know that it is the gift of God, not any desert of thine. Be not puffed up, joy not too much, neither do thou presume vainly; but be rather the more humble for that gift, and more wary and sollicitous in all thine Actions; for that hour will pass away, and temptation will succeed. When consolation is taken from thee, despair not presently; but with humility and patience wait for the heavenly visitation: for God is able again to give thee greater consolation. This is not new nor strange unto them that have experience in the way of God; for the great Saints and ancient Fathers had oftentimes experience of such kind of vicissitudes.

5. For which cause one under the en-

joyment of divine favour, said, *I said in my prosperity, I shall never be moved.* But in the want of this, he addeth what he found in himself; saying, *Thou turn'dst thy face from me, and I became troubled.* Yet doth he not despair in the midst of these changes, but more earnestly prayeth unto the Lord, and saith, *Unto thee, O Lord, will I cry, and I will pray unto my God.* Lastly, he receiveth the fruit of his prayer, and witnesseth that he was heard, saying. *The Lord hath heard me, and taken pity on me: the Lord is become my helper.* But wherein? *Thou hast turned,* saith he, *my sorrow into joy, and thou hast compassed me about with gladness.* If great Saints have been so dealt withal, we that are weak and poor ought not to despair, if we be sometimes fervent and sometimes cold: for the spirit cometh and goeth, according to the good pleasure of his will. For which cause blessed Job said, *Thou visitest him early in the morning, and suddenly thou provest him.*

6. Whereupon therefore can I hope, or wherein ought I to trust, but in the great mercy of God alone, and in the only hope of heavenly grace? For whether I enjoy the presence of good men, or religious brethren, or faithful friends, or holy Books, or excellent treatises, or sweet songs and hymns, all these help little, and have little favour, when grace forsaketh me, and I remain left in mine own

own poverty. At ſuch time there is no better remedy than patience, and the ordering of my ſelf according to the will of God.

7. I never found any ſo religious and devout, that hath not had ſometimes a withdrawing of grace, or felt not ſome decreaſe of zeal. There was never Saint ſo highly rapt, and illuminated, who firſt or laſt was not tempted. For he is not worthy of the high contemplation of God, who hath not been exerciſed with ſome tribulation for Gods ſake. For temptation going before, is wont to be a ſign of enſuing comfort. And unto thoſe that are proved by temptations, heavenly comfort is promiſed. *He that ſhall overcome*, ſaith he, *I will give him to eat of the tree of life.*

8. But divine comfort is given, that a man may be ſtronger to bear adverſities. There followeth alſo temptation, leſt he ſhould wax proud of any good. The devil ſleepeth not, neither is the fleſh as yet dead: therefore ceaſe not to prepare thy ſelf to the battel: For on thy right hand and on thy left are enemies that never reſt.

CHAP. X.

Of thankfulneſs for the grace of God.

WHy ſeekeſt thou reſt, ſince thou art born to labour? Diſpoſe thy ſelf

to patience rather than to comfort, a to the bearing of the cross, rather than gladness. What secular person is the that would not willingly receive spiritu joy and comfort, if he could always hav it? For spiritual comforts exceed all th delights of the world, and pleasures o the flesh. All worldly delights are eithe vain or unclean: but spiritual delight are only pleasant and honest, sprun from virtue, and infused by God int pure minds. But no man can always en joy these divine comforts according t his desire: for the time of temptatio is not long away.

2. False freedom of mind, and grea trust of our selves is very contrary to heavenly visitations. God doth well in giving the grace of comfort; but man doth evil in not returning all again unto God with thanksgiving. And therefore the gifts of grace cannot flow in us, because we are not thankful to the giver, and return them not wholly to the head-fountain. For grace ever attendeth him that is thankful: and from the proud shall be taken that which is wont to be given to the humble.

3. I desire not that consolation, that taketh from me compunction: nor do I affect that contẽplation which leadeth to haughtiness of mind. For all that is high is not holy; nor all that is sweet, good; nor every desire, pure; nor every thing

that

that is dear unto is, is grateful to God. I do willingly accept of that Grace, whereby I may ever become more humble & affected with an holy fear, and be made more ready to forsake my self. He that is thaught by the gift of grace, and school'd by the scourge of the withdrawing thereof, will not dare to attribute any good to himself, but rather acknowledge himself poor and naked. Give unto God that which is Gods, and ascribe unto thy self that which is thine own; that is, give thanks to God for his grace; and acknowledge that nothing is to be attributed to thee, but only sin and the punishment due thereunto.

4. Set thy self always in the lowest place & the highest shall be given thee: for the highest consists not without the lowest. The chiefest Saints before God, are the least in their own judgments: and how much the more glorious, so much the humbler within themselves. Those that are full of truth and heavenly glory, are not desirous of vain glory. Those that are firmly setled and grounded in God, can no way be proud. And they that ascribe all unto God, what good soever they have received, seek not glory one of another, but would have that glory which is from God alone: and desire above all things to praise God in himself, and in all the Saints, and always tend unto the same.

5. Be therefore thankful for the le gift, so shalt thou be meet to recei greater. Let the least be unto thee al as the greatest, and the most contemp ble as an especial gift. If thou consid the worth of the giver, no gift will see little, or of too mean esteem. For it not little that is given by the most hig God. Yea, if he should give punishme and stripes, it ought to be grateful; fo that he doth it always for our welfare whatsoever he permitteth to happe unto us. He that desireth to keep th grace of God, let him be thankful fo the grace given, and patient for the ta king away thereof. Let him pray that it may return. Let him be wary and humble; lest he lose it.

CHAP. XI.

How few the lovers of the Cross of Christ are.

JEsus hath now many lovers of his heavenly kingdom, but few bearers of his Cross. He hath many desirous of comfort, but few of tribulation. He findeth many companions of his table, but few of his abstinence. All desire to rejoyce with him, few will suffer any thing for him, *or with him*. Many follow Jesus unto the breaking of bread: but few to the drinking of the cup of his passion. Many reverence his

his miracles, few follow the ignominy of his Croſs. Many love Jeſus as long as adverſities happen not. Many praiſe and bleſs him, as long as they receive any comforts from him. But if Jeſus hide himſelf, and leave them but a while; they fall either into complaint, or into too much dejection of mind.

2. But they that love Jeſus for Jeſus, and not for ſome comfort of their own, bleſs him in all tribulation and anguiſh of heart, as well as in the greateſt comfort. And although he ſhould never give them comfort, they notwithſtanding would ever praiſe him, and always give him thanks.

3. O how powerful is the pure love of Jeſus, which is mixed with no ſelf-love, nor proper intereſt! Are not all thoſe to be called hirelings, that ever ſeek comforts? Do they not ſhew themſelves to be rather lovers of themſelves than of Chriſt, that always think of their own commodity and gain? Where may one be found that will ſerve God freely?

4. It is hard to find any one ſo ſpiritual that is ſtript of *the love of* all *earthly* things. For where is any one to be found that is indeed poor in ſpirit, and free from all *affection of* creatures? He is a Jewel of ſuch price as is ſcarce to be met with in theſe parts. If a man ſhould give all his wealth, yet is it nothing. And if he ſhould outwardly expreſs great re-

pentance, yet it is little. And if he should attain to all knowledge, he is yet afar off. And if he should be of great virtue, and very fervent devotion, yet there is much wanting: to wit, one thing, which is most necessary for him. What is that? That leaving all, he forsake himself, and go wholly from himself, and retain nothing of self-love: And when he hath done all that he knoweth to be done, let him think that he hath done nothing.

5. Let him not weigh that much which might be much esteemed; but according to truth let him affirm himself to be an unprofitable servant, as our Saviour hath said, *When you shall have done all things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants.* Then may he be truly poor and naked in spirit, and say with the Prophet, I am alone and poor: yet no man richer, no man more powerful, no man more free than he that can leave himself and all things, and set himself in the lowest place.

CHAP. XII.

Of the high way of the Holy Cross.

UNto many this speech seemeth hard, *Deny thy self, take up thy Cross, and follow Jesus.* But it will be much harder to hear that last word. *Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire.* For they that now willingly hear and follow the word

word of the Croſs, ſhall not then fear to to hear the ſentence of everlaſting damnation. This ſign of the Croſs ſhall be in heaven; when our Lord ſhall come to judgment. Then all the ſervants of the Croſs, who in their life-time conformed themſelves unto Chriſt crucified, ſhall draw near unto Chriſt the Judge with great confidence.

2. Why therefore feareſt thou to take up the Croſs; which leadeth thee to a Kingdom? In the Croſs is ſalvation, in the Croſs is life, in the Croſs is protection againſt our enemies, in the Croſs is infuſion of heavenly ſweetneſs, in the Croſs is ſtrength of mind, in the Croſs is joy of ſpirit, in the Croſs is the height of virtue, in the Croſs is the perfection of ſanctity. There is no ſalvation of the ſoul, nor hope of everlaſting life but in the Croſs. Take up therefore thy Croſs and follow Jeſus, and thou ſhalt go into life everlaſting. He is gone before, bearing his Croſs, and is dead for thee on the Croſs; that thou mayeſt alſo bear thy Croſs and deſire to die on the Croſs *with him*. For if thou dieſt with him, thou ſhalt alſo live with him. And if thou be his companion in pain, thou ſhalt be partaker with him alſo in glory.

3. Behold in the Croſs all doth conſiſt and all lyeth in our dying *upon it*: for there is no other way unto life, and unto true inward peace, but the way of

the holy Croſs, and of daily mortifi-
tion. Go where thou wilt, ſeek what-
ever thou wilt, thou ſhalt not find
higher way above, not a ſafer way belo
than the way of the holy Croſs. Diſpo
and order all things according to th
will and judgment: yet thou ſhalt eve
find, that of neceſſity thou muſt ſuff
ſomewhat either willingly or againſt th
will, and ſo thou ſhalt ever find the Croſ
For either thou ſhalt feel pain in thy bo-
dy, or in thy ſoul thou ſhalt ſuffer tribula-
tion of ſpirit.

4. Sometimes thou ſhalt be forſake
of God, ſometimes thou ſhalt be troub-
led by thy neighbours: and which i
more, oftentimes thou ſhalt be irkſome
to thy ſelf: neither canſt thou be deli-
vered or eaſed by any remedy or com-
fort; but ſo long as pleaſeth God, thou
oughteſt to bear it. For God will have
thee learn to ſuffer tribulation without
comfort; and that thou ſubject thy ſelf
wholly to him, & become more humble
by tribulation. No man hath ſo cordial a
feeling of the paſſion of Chriſt, as he
who hath ſuffered the like himſelf. The
croſs therefore is always ready, & every
where waits for thee. Thou canſt not
eſcape it whitherſoever thou runneſt:
for whereſoever thou goeſt, thou carrieſt
thy ſelf with thee, and ſhalt ever find thy
ſelf both above and below, without and
within, which way ſoever thou doſt turn
thee,

thee, every where thou ſhalt find the Croſs: and every where of neceſſity thou muſt have patience, if thou wilt have inward peace, and enjoy an everlaſting Crown.

5. If thou bear the Croſs willingly, it will bear thee, and lead thee to thy deſired end, to wit, where there ſhall be an end of ſuffering though here there ſhall not. If thou bear it unwillingly, thou makeſt for thy ſelf a new burden, and encreaſeſt thy load, and yet notwithſtanding thou muſt bear it. If thou caſt away one Croſs, without doubt thou ſhalt find another, and that perhaps a more heavy one.

6. Thinkeſt thou eſcape that which no man could ever avoid? which of the Saints in the world was without croſſes, and tribulation? Verily Jeſus Chriſt our Lord was never one hour without pain of ſuffering, ſo long as he lived. *Chriſt* (ſaith he) *ought to ſuffer, and ariſe again from the dead, & ſo to enter into his glory.* Luke 24. and how doſt thou ſeek any other way than this high way which is the way of the holy Croſs?

7. The whole life of Chriſt was a Croſs and Martyrdom: and doſt thou ſeek reſt and joy? Thou art deceived, thou art deceived if thou ſeekeſt any other thing than to ſuffer tribulations: for this whole mortal life is full of miſeries, and environed on every ſide with croſſes

crosses. And how much the more one hath profited in spirit, so much the heavier crosses he oftentimes findeth, for the love he beareth to God increaseth the grief which he endureth for his banishment.

8. But yet this man, though so many ways afflicted, is not without some refreshing comfort, for that he perceiveth much benefit to accrew unto him by the bearing of his Cross. For whilest he willingly putteth himself under it, all the burden of tribulation is turned into the confidence of divine comfort. And how much the more the flesh is wasted by affliction, so much the more is the spirit strengthened by inward grace. And sometimes he is so comforted with the desire of tribulation and adverfity, for the love of conforming himself to the Cross of Christ, that he would not wish at any time to be without sorrow and tribulation: because he believeth that so much the more acceptable he shall be unto God, how much the more, and more grievous things he can suffer for him. This is not the power of man, but it is the grace of Christ, that can, and doeth so much in frail flesh; that what naturally it always abhorreth and flyeth, that by fervour of spirit, it encounters with delight.

9. It is not according to mans inclination to bear the Cross, to chastise and sub-

ſubdue the body, to fly honours, to ſuffer contumelies with a willing heart, to deſpiſe himſelf and to wiſh to be deſpiſed, to bear all adverſities and damnages, and to deſire no proſperity in this world. If thou conſidereſt thy ſelf, thou ſhalt be able to perform no ſuch matter of thy ſelf. But if thou truſteſt in the Lord, ſtrength ſhall be given thee from heaven, and the world and fleſh ſhall be made ſubject to thy command. Neither ſhalt thou fear thy enemy the Devil, if thou be armed with faith, and beareſt the Croſs of Chriſt.

10. Set therefore thy ſelf, like a good and faithful ſervant of Chriſt to bear manfully the Croſs of thy Lord, who was crucified for thee out of love. Prepare thy ſelf to bear many adverſities and divers kinds of troubles in this miſerable life: for ſo it will be with thee, whereſoever thou be, and ſo ſurely thou wilt find it, whereſoever thou hide thy ſelf. So it muſt be, and there is no remedy or means to avoid tribulation and ſorrow, but to bear them. Drink of the cup of our Lord heartily, if thou wilt be his friend, and deſireſt to have part with him. As for comforts, leave them to God: let him do therein as ſhall beſt pleaſe him. Set thou thy ſelf to ſuffer tribulations, and account them the greateſt comforts: for that the ſufferings of this life are not worthy of the glory

which

which is to come, although thou alone could'ſt ſuffer them all.

11. When thou ſhalt come to this eſtate, that tribulation ſhall ſeem ſweet and ſavoury unto thee for Chriſt: then thou mayeſt think it is well with thee, for thou haſt found a Paradiſe upon earth. As long as it is grievous to thee to ſuffer, and that thou deſireſt to fly it; ſo long ſhalt thou be ill at eaſe: and the tribulation thou flyeſt will follow thee every where.

12. If thou doſt ſet thy ſelf to that thou oughteſt, to wit, to ſuffer, and to die to thy ſelf, it will quickly be better with thee, and thou ſhalt find peace. Although thou ſhouldeſt have been rapt even unto the third heaven with Paul, thou art not for this ſecured that thou ſhall ſuffer no adverſity. *I* (ſaith Jeſus) *will ſhew him how great things he muſt ſuffer for my name.* It remaineth therefore, that thou ſuffer, if thou wilt love Jeſus, and perpetually ſerve him.

13. O that thou wert worthy to ſuffer ſomething for the name of Jeſus! how great glory would it be unto thee, what joy to all the Saints of God, how great edification alſo to thy neighbour! For all do commend patience, though few deſire to ſuffer. With great reaſon thou oughteſt to be willing to ſuffer a little for Chriſt; ſince many ſuffer far greater things for the world.

14. Know

14. Know for certain that thou oughteſt to lead a dying life. And how much the more every one dyeth to himſelf, ſo much the more doth he begin to live to God. No man is fit to attain unto heavenly things, unleſs he ſubmit himſelf to the bearing of adverſities for Chriſt. Nothing is more grateful unto God, nothing more wholeſome to thee in this world, than to ſuffer willingly for Chriſt. And if it were in thy choice, thou ſhouldeſt rather wiſh to ſuffer Adverſities for Chriſt, than to enjoy the delight of many comforts; becauſe hereby thou ſhouldeſt be more like unto Chriſt, and more conformable to all the Saints. For our worthineſs, and the proficiency of our ſpiritual eſtate conſiſteth not in many ſweetneſſes and comforts, but rather in ſuffering great afflictions and tribulation.

15. If there had been any better thing, and more profitable to the health of man than ſuffering, ſurely Chriſt would have ſhewed it by word and example. But he plainly exhorteth all the Diſciples that followed him, and all that deſire to follow him, to the bearing of the Croſs, and ſaith, *If any will come after me, let him deny himſelf and take up his Croſs, and follow me.* So that when we have read and ſearched all, let this be the laſt concluſion, *That by many tribulations we muſt enter into the Kingdome of God.*

THE

THE THIRD BOOK.

CHAP. I.

Of the inward speech of Christ unto a faithful soul.

I *will hear what the Lord God will speak in me.* Blessed is the soul that heareth the Lord speaking in her, and receiveth from his mouth the word of comfort. Blessed are those ears that receive the sound of the divine voice, and listen not to the whisperings of the world. Blessed indeed are those ears that hearken not to the voice which soundeth outwardly, but unto the truth which teacheth inwardly. Blessed are the eyes that are shut to outward things, but open to those thnigs that are internal. Blessed are they that enter into the inward things, and endeavour to prepare themselves more and more by daily exercises to the attaining of heavenly secrets. Blessed be they that delight to converse with God, and rid themselves of all worldly impediments.

2. Consider these things, my soul, and shut up the door of thy sensual desires, that thou mayest hear what thy Lord God speaketh in thee. Thus saith thy Beloved, I am thy safety, thy peace, and thy life; Keep thy self with me, and thou

thou ſhalt find peace. Leave all tranſitory things, and ſeek thoſe that be everlaſting. What are all temporal things, but deceiving ſnares? and what do all creatures avail thee, if thou be forſaken by the Creator; Forſake therefore all earthly things and labour to pleaſe thy Creator, and be faithfull unto him, that thou mayeſt attain unto the true happineſs.

CHAP. II.

That truth ſpeaketh inwardly without noiſe of words.

Chriſtian. Speake Lord, for thy ſervant heareth: I am thy ſervant, grant me underſtanding, that I may know thy teſtimonies. Incline my heart to the words of thy mouth. Let thy ſpeech diſtil as the dew *upon my ſoul.* The children of Iſrael in times paſt ſaid unto Moſes, *Speak unto us, and we will hear thee: Let not the Lord ſpeak unto us, leſt we die.* Not ſo Lord, not ſo, I beſeech thee. But rather with the Prophet Samuel, I humbly and earneſtly intreat, *Speak Lord, for thy ſervant heareth.* Let not Moſes ſpeak unto me, nor any of the Prophets, but do thou rather ſpeak my Lord God, the inſpirer and enlightner of all the Prophets: for thou alone without them canſt perfectly inſtruct me, but they without thee can profit nothing.

2. They indeed may ſound forth words,

words, but they cannot give ſpirit and life: they ſpeak marvellous well, but if thou be ſilent, they inflame not the heart. They may teach the letter, but thou openeſt the ſenſe. They bring forth myſteries, but thou unlockeſt the meaning of ſealed things. They declare thy commandments, but thou helpeſt to fulfil them. They ſhew the way, but thou giveſt ſtrength to walk in it. They work only exteriourly, but thou inſtructeſt and enlightneſt the heart. They water outwardly, but thou giveſt fruitfulneſs. They make a noiſe with words, but thou giveſt underſtanding to the hearing.

3. Let not therefore Moſes ſpeak unto me, but thou my Lord God the everlaſting Truth, leſt I die, and prove unfruitful, if I be warned outwardly, only and not inflamed within; leſt the word heard and not fulfilled, known and not loved, believed and not obſerved, turn to my condemnation. Speak therefore Lord, for thy ſervant heareth, for thou haſt the words of everlaſting life. Speak unto me to the comfort of my ſoul, and to the amendment of my whole life, and to thy praiſe and glory, and everlaſting honour.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

That the words of God are to be heard with humility, and that many weigh them not.

Chriſt. Son, hear my words, words of greateſt ſweetneſs, excelling all the knowledge of the Philoſophers and wiſe men of this world. My words are *ſpirit and life*, not to be weighed by the underſtanding of man. They are not to be drawn to vain liking, but to be heard with ſilence, and to be received with all humility and great affection.

Chriſtian. And I ſaid, Bleſſed is the man whom thou ſhalt inſtruct, O Lord, and ſhalt teach thy law, that thou mayeſt give him reſt from the evil days, and that he be not deſtroyed upon earth.

2. *Chriſt.* I (*ſaith our Lord*) have taught the Prophets from the beginning, and ceaſe not in theſe days to ſpeak to every one: but many are hardned and deaf to my ſpeech. The great number do more willingly liſten to the world, than to God: and follow ſooner the deſires of their fleſh, than the will of God. The world promiſeth temporal and ſmall things, and is ſerved with great eagerneſs: I promiſe moſt high and eternal things, and the hearts of men are nothing moved therewith. Who is he that ſerveth and obeyeth me with equal care to that with which the world and the

the Lords thereof are ſerved? *Bluſh Sidon, ſaith the Sea.* And if thou ask the cauſe, hear wherefore: For a little Fr bend a long journey is undertaken: fo everlaſting life many will ſcarce onc lift a foot from the ground. A thing o ſmall value is ſought after greedily: fo a penny ſometimes there is foul conten-tion: for a vain thing and a ſleight pro-miſe, men ceaſe not to toil day & night.

3. But *alas* for an unchangeable good, for an ineſtimable reward, for the high-eſt honor & glory without end, they are loth to take the leaſt pains. Bluſh there-fore ſlothful and complaining Servant, that they are found to be more ready to deſtruction, than thou to life. They re-joyce more in vanity than thou in the truth. And yet they are ſometimes fru-ſtrated of their hope: but my promiſe deceiveth none, nor ſendeth him away empty that truſteth in me. I will give that which I have promiſed, I will fulfil that which I have ſaid; but to him that remains faithful in my love to the end. I am the rewarder of all that are good, and do try my devout ſervants with ſtrong trials.

4. Write my words in thy heart, and think diligently of them: for they will be very neceſſary in time of temptation. What thou underſtandeſt not when thou readeſt, thou ſhalt know in the day of vi-ſitation. I am wont to viſit my elect two

ſeveral ways, to wit, with temptation, and comfort. And I daily read two leſſons unto them, one reprehending their vices, another exhorting them to the increaſe of virtues. He that hath my words and deſpiſeth them, hath within himſelf that which ſhall judge him at the laſt day.

A prayer to implore the grace of devotion.

5. O Lord my God, thou art to me whatſoever is good. Who am I, that dare ſpeak unto thee? I am thy pooreſt ſervant and a moſt vile worm much more poor and contemptible than I can or dare expreſs. Remember yet O Lord, that I am nothing, have nothing, and can do nothing. Thou alone art good, juſt, and holy: thou canſt do all things, thou doeſt all things, thou filleſt all things, only the ſinner thou ſendeſt empty away. Remember thy mercies, and fill my heart with thy grace, who will not that thy works be void and in vain.

6. How can I bear up my ſelf in this miſerable life, unleſs thou ſtrengthen me with thy mercy and grace? Turn not thy face from me, delay not thy viſitation; draw not away thy comfort, leſt my ſoul become as the thirſty land unto thee. Lord teach me to fulfil thy will, teach me to live worthily, and humbly in thy ſight, for thou art my wiſdom, thou doſt truly know me, and didſt know me before

before the world was made, and before I was born in the world.

CHAP. IV.

That we ought to live in truth and humility before God.

Christ. Son, walk before me in sincerity and truth, and ever seek me in simplicity of heart. He that walketh before me in truth, shall be defended from evil incursions, and the Truth shall deliver him from seducers, and from the detractions of the wicked. If the Truth shall have made thee free, thou shalt be truly free, and shalt not care for the vain speeches of men.

Christian. Lord, it is true. According as thou saidst, so I beseech thee let it be with me, let thy truth teach me, and keep me, and bring me safe to an happy end. Let it deliver me from all evil affection and inordinate love; and I shall walk with thee in great freedom of heart.

2. *Christ.* I will teach thee (saith the Truth) those things that are right and pleasing in my sight. Think of thy sins with great displeasure and grief, and never esteem thy self any thing for thy good works. Thou art in very deed a sinner, thou art subject to, and encumbred with many passions. Of thy self thou always tendest to nothing; thou art quickly cast down, quickly overcome, quickly troubled,

troubled, quickly dissolved. Thou hast nothing wherein thou canst glory, but many things for which thou oughtest to despise thy self; for thou art much weaker than thou art able to comprehend.

3. And therefore let nothing seem much unto thee whatsoever thou doest. Let nothing seem great, nothing precious and wonderful; let nothing seem worthy of estimation, nothing high, nothing truly commendable and to be desired, but that which is everlasting. Let the eternal Truth above all things please thee. Let thy own great unworthiness alwayes displease thee. Fear nothing, blame and flie nothing so much as thy vices and sins; which ought to displease more than the losses of any thing whatsoever. Some walk not sincerely in my sight, but led by a certain curiosity and pride, will know my secrets, and understand the high things of God, neglecting themselves and their own salvation. These oftentimes, for that I resist them, do fall into great temptations and sins, for their pride and curiosity.

4. Fear the judgments of God, dread the wrath of the Almighty. But discuss not the works of the highest. Search thine own iniquities, in how much thou hast offended, and how much good thou hast neglected. Some carry their religion only in books, some in pictures, some in outward signs and figures. Some

have me in their mouths, but little in their hearts. There are others that being illuminated in their understandings, and purged in their affection do always breath after things eternal, and are unwilling to hear of the things of this world, and do serve the necessities of nature with grief: and these perceive what the Spirit of truth speaketh in them: because it teacheth them to despise earthly, and love heavenly things; to neglect the world, and all the day and night to desire heaven.

CHAP. V.

Of the wonderful effect of divine love.

Christian. I praise thee, O heavenly Father, Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, for that thou hast vouchsafed to remember me a poor Creature. O Father of mercies and God of all comfort, thanks be unto thee, who sometimes with thy comfort refreshest me unworthy of all comfort. I ever bless and glorifie thee with thy only begotten Son, and the holy Ghost, for ever and ever. O Lord God, the holy lover of my soul, when thou shalt come into my heart, all that is within me will rejoyce. Thou art my glory and the exultation of my heart. Thou art my hope and refuge in the day of my tribulation.

2. But for that I am yet weak in love, and

and imperfect in virtue, I have need therefore to be ſtrenthened and comforted by thee: viſit me therefore often, and inſtruct me with thy holy diſcipline. Deliver me from evil paſſions, and heal my heart of all inordinate affections; that being cured within & well purged, I may be made fit to love, ſtrong to ſuffer, and conſtant to perſevere.

3. Love is a great thing, in very truth a great good; which alone maketh every thing that is heavy, light; and beareth equally that which is unequal. For it carrieth a burden without burden, and maketh every thing that is bitter, ſweet and ſavoury. The noble love of Jeſus inforceth man to do great things, and ſtirreth him up to deſire always what is moſt perfect. Love will be aloft, and not kept down with any baſe thing. Love will be free and looſe from all worldly affection, to the end it's inward ſight be not prejudiced, that it be not either entangled by any temporal proſperity, or ſubdued by adverſity. Nothing is ſweeter than love, nothing ſtronger, nothing higher, nothing more large, nothing more pleaſant, nothing fuller nor better in heaven or in earth: becauſe love is born of God, and cannot reſt but in God, above all creatures.

4. He that loveth; flyeth, runeth, and rejoyceth; he is free and not held in. He giveth all for all, and hath all in all, for

that he resteth in one Highest above all from whence all good floweth and proceedeth. He respecteth not the gifts, but turneth himself above all goods unto the giver. Love oftentimes knoweth no measure, but is inflamed above all measure. Love feeleth no burden, weigheth no pains, desireth above its strength, complaineth not of impossibility, for that it thinketh all things lawful and possible. It is therefore able to undertake all things, and performeth and bringeth many things to pass; whereas he that doth not love, fainteth and lyes down.

5. Love watcheth, and sleeping sleepeth not: being wearied, is nor tired; straitned, is not pressed; frightned, is not troubled: but like a lively flame and burning torch, breaketh upwards, and securely passeth through all. If any one loveth, he knoweth what this voice cryeth; A loud cry in the ears of God is the ardent affection of the soul, which saith, *My God, my love, thou art wholly mine, and I wholly thine.*

6. Enlarge me in love, that with the inward mouth of my heart I may taste how sweet it is to love, and to be melted, & swim in thy love. Let me be possessed by love, mounting above my self with excessive fervour and admiration. Let me sing the song of love, let me follow thee on high my beloved; let my soul rejoycing through love, spend it self in thy

thy praiſe. Let me love thee more than my ſelf, and not my ſelf but for thee, and all in thee that truly love thee, as the law of love commandeth which ſhineth out from thee.

7. Love is ſwift, ſincere, pious, pleaſant and delightful, ſtrong patient, faithful, prudent, long-ſuffering, manly, and never ſeeking it ſelf. For where one ſeeketh himſelf, there he falleth from love. Love is circumſpect, humble, and upright: not ſoftly, nor light, not attending unto vain things, ſober, chaſt, conſtant, quiet, and guarded in all the ſenſes. Love is ſubject and obedient to Superiours, mean and abject to it ſelf, devout and thankful unto God, truſting and hoping always in him, even then when God imparteth no ſweetneſs unto it: for without ſorrow none liveth in love.

8. He that is not ready to ſuffer all things, and ſtand to the will of his beloved, is not worthy to be called a lover. A lover ought to embrace willingly all that is hard and diſtaſteful for his beloved; and not to turn away from him for any contrary accidents.

CHAP. VI.

Of the proof a true Lover.

CHRIST. Son, thou art not yet a ſtrong and prudent lover. *Chriſtian.* Wherefore Lord? *CHRIST.* Becauſe

thou giveſt over for a ſmall adverſity, and too greedily ſeekeſt comfort. A ſtrong lover ſtandeth firmly in temptations, and giveth not credit to the crafty perſwaſions of the enemy. As I pleaſe him in proſperity, ſo I am not unpleaſant to him in adverſity.

2. A prudent lover conſidereth not ſo much the gift of his lover, as the love of the giver. He rather eſteemeth the good will than the value, and placeth all gifts under his beloved. A noble lover reſteth not in the gift, but in me above every gift. All therefore is not loſt if ſometimes thou haſt leſs taſte of me than thou wouldeſt. That good and ſweet affection which thou ſometimes feeleſt, is the effect of preſent grace, and a certain fore-taſte of the heavenly Country; whereon thou mayeſt not rely too much, for it goeth and cometh. But to fight againſt evil motions of the mind which may happen unto thee, and to deſpiſe the ſuggeſtions of the divel, is a notable ſign of virtue and ſhall have great reward.

3. Let not therefore ſtrange fancies forced into thee, of any matter whatſoever, trouble thee. Retain a ſtrong purpoſe and an upright intention to God. Neither is it an illuſion that ſometimes thou art ſuddenly rapt on high, and preſently returneſt unto the accuſtomed vanities of thy heart. For thou doſt rather unwil-

unwillingly ſuffer them, than commit them: and as long as they diſpleaſe thee, and thou ſtriveſt againſt them, it is matter of reward, and no loſs.

4. Know that thy ancient enemy doth ever ſtrive to hinder thy deſire to good, and to divert thee from all religious exerciſe: to wit, from the devout memory of my paſſion, from the profitable remembrance of thy ſins, from the guard of thine own heart, and from the firm purpoſe of profiting in virtue. He injecteth many evil thoughts into thy mind, that he may cauſe a weariſomneſs and horrour in thee, to draw thee from prayer and holy reading. Humble confeſſion is diſpleaſing unto him; and if he could, he would cauſe thee to ceaſe from receiving the Sacrament. Truſt him not, nor care for him, although he ſhould often ſet ſnares of deceit to intrap thee. Charge him with it when he ſuggeſteth evil and unclean thoughts unto thee; Say unto him: Away unclean ſpirit, bluſh miſerable wretch; thou art very unclean that bringeſt ſuch things unto mine ears. Away from me wicked deceiver, thou ſhalt have no part in me: but Jeſus ſhall be with me as a ſtrong warriour, and thou ſhalt ſtand confounded. I had rather die, and undergoe any torment, than conſent unto thee. Hold thy peace and be ſilent; I will hear thee no more, though thou ſhouldeſt work

me many troubles. The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? If whole armies should stand together against me, my heart shall not fear. The Lord is my helper and my redeemer.

5. Fight like a good souldier: and if thou sometimes fall through frailty, take greater strength than before, trusting in my more abundant grace: and take great heed of vain pleasing of thy self and of pride. This brings many into errour, and makes them sometimes fall into almost incurable blindness. Let the fall of the proud foolishly presuming of themselves serve thee for a warning, and keep thee perpetually humble.

CHAP. VII.

That grace is to be hid under the veil of humility.

Christ. Son, it is more profitable and safe for thee to hide the grace of devotion; not to extol thy self, nor to speak much, nor to esteem much thereof, but rather to despise thy self, and fear it, as given to one unworthy thereof. This affection is not to be cleaved unto, which may be quickly changed unto the contrary. Think when thou art in grace, how miserable and needy thou art wont to be without grace. Neither doth therein only consist, the proficiency of a spiritual life, when thou hast the grace of com-

comfort; but when thou humbly, ſelf-denyingly and patiently ſuffereſt the withdrawing thereof, ſo that thou be not then leſs diligent in the exerciſe of prayer, nor ſuffer the reſt of thy accuſtomed duties to be neglected; but that thou willingly perform what lieth in thee, according to the beſt of thy power and underſtanding; not neglecting thy ſelf wholly for the dryneſs and trouble of mind which thou feeleſt.

2. There are many that, when it ſucceedeth not well with them, preſently they become impatient or ſlothful. The way of man is not always in his power, but it belongeth to God to give and to comfort when he will, and how much he will, and whom he will; as it ſhall pleaſe him, and no more. Some unadviſed perſons have overthrown themſelves for *the greedy deſire which they had of* the grace of devotion; attempting more than they were able to perform, not weighing the meaſure of their weakneſs, but following rather the deſire of their heart, than the judgment of reaſon. And becauſe they preſumed on greater matters than was pleaſing to God, they quickly loſt his grace. They became needy, and left in a dejected eſtate, that built themſelves neſts in heaven: to the end that being humbled and impoveriſhed, they might learn not to flie with their own wings, but to truſt

under my wings. They that are yet but novices and unacquainted in the way of the Lord, unleſs they govern themſelves by the counſel of diſcret perſons, may eaſily be deceived and overthrown.

3. And if they will rather follow their own judgment, than give credit to others that are experienced, their end will be dangerous, if they will not be drawn from their own conceit. Seldom thoſe that are ſelfwiſe ſuffer themſelves humbly to be governed by others. A little knowledg with humility, and a ſlender underſtanding, is better than great meaſures of learning with a vain ſelf-liking. It is better for thee to have little than much of that whereof thou mayeſt be proud. He doth not diſcretly, that wholly gives himſelf over to mirth, forgetting his former poverty, and the chaſte fear of God, which feareth to loſe the grace which he hath obtained. Neither is he virtuouſly wiſe, that in time of adverſity or any tribulation whatſoever, yieldeth to deſpairing thoughts, and thinketh and imagineth of me leſs confidently than he ought.

4. He that will be over ſecure in time of peace, ſhall be often found in time of war too dejected and fearful. If thou couldeſt always continue humble and lowly within thy ſelf, and order and govern thy ſpirit well, thou ſhouldeſt not ſo ſoon fall into danger and offence. It is good

good counſel, that when fervour of ſpirit is kindled within thee, thou ſhouldeſt think what will become of thee, when that light ſhall leave thee. And when that doth happen, remember the light may return again, which for thy inſtruction and my glory I have withdrawn for a time.

5. Such proof is often more profitable, than if thou ſhouldeſt always enjoy proſperity according to thy deſire. For a mans worthineſs is not to be judged by the number of viſions and comforts which he hath, or by his knowledg in Scripture or by his being placed in high degree; but in that he is grounded in true humility, & filled with divine love; if he always purely and entirely ſeek the honour of God, if he eſteem himſelf nothing, and unfaindly deſpiſe himſelf, and rejoyce more to be deſpiſed and humbled by others, than to be honoured.

CHAP. VIII.

Of a mean conceit of our ſelves in the ſight of God.

Chriſtian. Shall I ſpeak unto my Lord ſith I am duſt and aſhes? If I eſteem better of my ſelf, behold thou ſtandeſt againſt me, and my iniquities bear true witneſs *againſt me:* neither can I ſpeak againſt it. But if I abaſe and eſteem nothing of my ſelf, and caſt off

all ſelf-eſteem, and (as I am) account my ſelf to be duſt, thy grace will be favourable unto me, and thy light will be near unto my heart; and all ſelf-eſteem, how little ſoever, ſhall be ſwallowed up in the deep valley of my nothingneſs, and periſh everlaſtingly. There thou ſheweſt my ſelf unto me, what I am, what I have been, and whither I am come; for I am nothing, and I knew it not. And if I be left to my ſelf, behold I become nothing but mere weakneſs. But if thou ſuddenly look upon me, I am preſently made ſtrong, and filled with new joy. And it is a great marvel, that I am ſo ſuddenly lifted up, and ſo graciouſly embraced by thee, that of mine own weight always ſink downward.

2. Thy love is the cauſe hereof, freely preventing me, and relieving me in ſo many neceſſities, preſerving me alſo from grievous dangers, and delivering me (as I may truly ſay) from innumerable evils. For ſurely by inordinate loving my ſelf, I loſt my ſelf and by ſeeking thee alone, and purely loving thee, I have found both my ſelf and thee, and by that love have more deeply brought my ſelf to nothing. For that thou, O moſt ſweet Lord, dealeſt with me above all deſert, and above all that I dare hope & requeſt.

3. Bleſſed be thou my God; for although I be unworthy of any benefits, yet the nobleneſs of thy bounty and thy infinite

infinite goodneſs never ceaſeth to do good even to the ungrateful, and to them that be turned away far from thee. Turn us unto thee, O Lord, that we may be thankful, humble, and holy; for thou art our ſafety, our power, and our ſtrength.

CHAP. IX.

That all things are to be referred unto God, as unto the laſt end.

Chriſt. Son, I ought to be thy chiefeſt and laſt end, if thou deſireſt to be truly bleſſed. With this intention thy affection ſhall be purified which is oftentimes inclined inordinatly to it ſelf and unto creatures. For if in any thing thou ſeekeſt thy ſelf, thou preſently fainteſt and drieſt up within thy ſelf. Refer therefore all things chiefly unto me, for I am he that have given all. Conſider every thing as flowing from the higheſt good; and therefore all things are to be reduced unto me as unto their Original.

2. Out of me, as out of a living fountain, the little and the great, the poor and the rich, do draw the water of life: and they that willingly and freely ſerve me, ſhall receive grace for grace. But he that will glory out of me, or be delighted in any particular good, ſhall not be grounded in true joy, nor inlarged in his heart, but ſhall be many wayes encumbred and

and ſtraitned. Thou oughteſt therefore to aſcribe nothing of good unto thy ſelf, nor attribute goodneſs unto any man: but give all unto God, without whom man hath nothing. I have beſtowed all, and will that all be returned unto me again: and with great ſtrictneſs I require thanks.

3. This is the truth that putteth to flight vain glory. And if heavenly grace and true love enter in, there ſhall be no envy nor ſtraitneſs of heart, neither ſhall there be any place for ſelf-love. For divine love overcometh all, and enlargeth all the powers of the ſoul. If thou beeſt truly wiſe, in me alone thou wilt rejoyce, in me alone thou wilt hope: for none is good, but God alone, who is to be praiſed above all things, and to be bleſſed in all.

CHAP. X.

That the world being deſpiſed, it is a ſweet thing to ſerve God.

Chriſtian. Now I will ſpeak again, O Lord, and will not be ſilent, I will ſay in the ears of my God, my Lord, and my King that is on high, *Pſal.* 31. *O how great is the abundance of thy goodneſs O Lord which thou haſt laid up for thoſe that fear thee!* But what art thou to them that love the? What to them that ſerve thee with their whole heart? Truly unſpeakable is the ſweetneſs of contemplating

plating thee, which thou beſtoweſt on them that love thee. In this chiefly thou haſt ſhewed me the ſweetneſs of thy love: for that when I was not, thou madeſt me; and when I went aſtray far off from thee, thou broughteſt me back again, that I might ſerve thee, and haſt commanded me to love thee.

2. O fountain of everlaſting love what ſhall I ſay of thee? How can I forget thee, that haſt vouchſafed to remember me, even when I waſted away, and periſhed? Thou haſt ſhewed mercy to thy ſervant beyond all my expectation: and haſt exhibited thy favour & friendſhip beyond all merit. What ſhall I return unto thee for this grace. For it is not granted to every one to forſake all things, to renounce the world, and to undertake a life of religious retiredneſs. Is it much that I ſhould ſerve thee, whom all creatures are bound to ſerve? It ought not to ſeem much unto me to ſerve thee: but this rather ſeemeth much and marvellous unto me that thou vouchſafeſt to receive into thy ſervice one ſo poor and unworthy, and to joyn him with thy beloved ſervants.

3. Behold, all is thine which I have, and whereby I ſerve thee. And yet contrary-wiſe thou rather ſerveſt me than I thee. Behold, heaven and earth, which thou haſt created for the ſervice of man, are ready at hand, and do daily perform what-

whatſoever thou doſt command; and this is little: yea, thou haſt alſo appointed the Angels to the ſervice of man. But that which excelleth all this, is, that thou thy ſelf haſt vouchſafed to ſerve man, and haſt promiſed to give thy ſelf unto him.

4. What ſhall I give thee for all theſe thouſands of benefits? I would I could ſerve thee all the days of my life. I would I were able at leaſt for one day, to do thee ſome worthy ſervice! Thou art truly worthy of all ſervice, of all honour, and everlaſting praiſe. Thou art truly my Lord, and I thy poor ſervant, that am bound to ſerve thee with all my might, neither ought I ever to be weary of praiſing thee. And this I wiſh to do, this I deſire: and whatſoever is wanting unto me, vouchſafe I beſeech thee to ſupply.

5. It is a great honour, a great glory to ſerve thee, and deſpiſe all things for thee. For great grace ſhall be given to them that ſhall willingly ſubject themſelves to thy moſt holy ſervice. They ſhall receive the moſt ſweet comfort of the holy Ghoſt, that for thy love ſhall renounce all carnal delights, they ſhall attain great freedom of mind, that for thy names ſake ſhall enter into the narrow way, and ſhall have left off all worldly care.

6. O ſweet and delightful ſervice of God,

God, by which man is truly made free and holy! O ſacred ſtate of religious employment, which maketh man equal to Angels, pleaſing to God, terrible to devils, grateful and of great eſteem to all the faithful! O ſervice to be imbraced and always wiſhed for, by which we obtain the greateſt good, and attain to that which never ſhall have an end.

CHAP. XI.

That the deſires of our heart are to be examined and moderated.

Chriſt. Son, thou oughteſt to learn many things more, which thou haſt not well learned.

Chriſtian. What are thoſe Lord?

Chriſt. That thou frame thy deſires wholly according to my pleaſure; and be not a lover of thy ſelf, but an affectionate follower of my will. Thy deſires oftentimes enflame thee, and drive thee forwards with violence: but conſider whether thou art moved rather for my honour, than for thine own profit. If I be the cauſe, thou wilt be well content with whatſoever I ſhall ordain: but if there lurk in thee any ſelf-ſeeking, behold this is it that hindereth thee and weigheth thee down.

2. Beware therefore thou lean not too much upon thy own preconceived deſire, without asking my counſel, leſt perhaps

haps afterwards it repent thee, and thou begin now to dislike that which before did please thee, and which thou earnestly desired as the best. For every affection that seemeth good is not presently to be followed: nor every contrary affection at the first to be avoided. It is expedient sometimes to use a restraint even in good desires and endeavours, lest by importunity thou incurre distraction of mind, and by thy want of self-government beget a scandal unto others; or being gainsaid by others thou be suddenly troubled and fall.

3. Yet sometimes thou oughtest to use violence, and resist manfully thy sensual appetites, and respect not what the flesh should, or would not; but rather labour that even perforce it be subject to the spirit. And it is to be chastised so long, and to be forced under servitude, until it readily obey in all things, and learn to be content with a little, and to be pleased with plain things, and not to murmure against any inconvenience.

CHAP. XII.

Of patience, and of striving against concupiscence.

Christian. Lord God, I perceive patience is very necessary unto me, for that many adversities do happen in this life. For howsoever I shall dispose of my

my peace, my life cannot be without war and affliction.

Christ. So it is Son. And my will is not that thou ſeek after that peace which is void of temptations, or that which feeleth no contrariety; but then think that thou haſt found peace, when thou art exerciſed with ſundry tribulations, and tried in many adverſities.

2. If thou ſay, that thou art not able to ſuffer much, how then wilt thou endure the fire hereafter? of two evils the leſs is always to be choſen. That thou mayſt therefore avoid everlaſting puniſhment in the next world, endeavour to ſuffer patiently for God the preſent evils of this. Doſt thou think that the men of this world ſuffer little or nothing? Look into the life even of them that live in greateſt delicacies, and thou ſhalt find it otherwiſe. But thou wilt ſay, They have many delights, and follow their own wills, and therefore they make ſmall account of their tribulations: Be it ſo, that they have whatſoever they will; but how long doſt thou think it will laſt?

3. Behold, the wealthy of this world vaniſh away like ſmoke, and there ſhall be no memory of their joys paſt. Yea, even while they live alſo, they reſt not in them without bitterneſs, irkſomeneſs & fear. For the ſelf ſame thing in which they take their delight, is oftentimes unto them the cauſe of ſorrow. They have

have their desert, who for that they inordinatly seek and follow delights, they do not enjoy them but with shame and sorrow.

4. O how short and false, how inordinate and filthy are all those pleasures! Yet so drunken and blind are men that they understand it not: but like dumb beasts, for a little pleasure of a corruptible life, they incurre the *eternal* death of their soul. Do not thou therefore my Son, go after thy lusts, but forsake thine own will, *Psal.* 37. *Delight in the Lord, and he will give thee the desires of thy heart.*

5. For if thou desire true delight, and to be more plentifully comforted by me, behold, in the contempt of all worldly things, and in the cutting off all base delights shall be thy blessing, and abundant comforts shall be given thee. And how much the more thou withdraweſt thy self from all the comfort of creatures, so much the sweeter and more powerful consolations shalt thou find in me. But at first thou canst not attain unto them without some sorrow, nor without a laborious conflict. Thy old custome will make resistance, and thou must overcome it with another custom that is better. Thy flesh will murmure; but thou must bridle it, with fervour of spirit. The old serpent will sting & trouble thee; but by prayer he shall be put to flight,

flight, and by profitable induſtry thou ſhalt ſtop the way againſt him.

CHAP. XIII.

Of the humble obedience of a ſubject, according to the example of Chriſt.

CHRIST. Son, he that endeavoureth to withdraw himſelf from obedience, withdraws himſelf from grace. And he that ſeeketh things private, ſhall loſe the publick. He that doeth not willingly and freely ſubmit himſelf to his Superiour, it is a ſign that his fleſh is not as yet perfectly obedient unto him, but oftentimes kicketh, and murmureth againſt him. Learn therefore readily to ſubmit thy ſelf to thy ſuperiour, if thou deſireſt to ſubdue thine own fleſh. For the outward enemy is ſooner overcome, if the inward man be not waſted. There is no worſe enemy, nor more troubleſome to the ſoul, than thou art unto thy ſelf, not agreeing well with the ſpirit. Thou muſt of neceſſity have a true contempt of thy ſelf, if thou wilt prevail againſt fleſh and blood.

2. Becauſe thou loveſt thy ſelf as yet too inordinatly, therefore thou art afraid to reſign thy ſelf wholly to the will of others. But what great matter is it, if thou, that art duſt and nothing, ſubmit thy ſelf to a man for God, when I the Almighty and higheſt Sóveraign who created

created all things of nothing, humbly submitted my self unto man for thee: I became the most humble and abject of men, that thou mightest overcome thy pride with my humility. Learn to obey thou that art dust. Learn to humble thy self thou earth and clay, and put thy self under the feet of all men. Learn to break thine own will, and to yield thy self to all Subjection.

3. Be vehement against thy self, and suffer not pride to live in thee: but so humble and submit thy self to all, that every one may go over thee, and tread thee as dirt of the streets under their feet. Vain man, what canst thou complain of? what canst thou answer, foul sinner, to them that reprove thee, who hast so often offended God, and so many times deserved hell? But mine eye hath spared thee, because thy soul was precious in my sight; that thou mightest know my love, and alwayes remain thankful for my benefits; and that thou mightest continually give thy self to true subjection and humility, and mightest bear patiently the contempt of thy self.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the secret judgments of God to be considered, lest we be exalted in our good deeds.

Christian. Thou thundereſt forth thy judgments over me, O Lord, ſhakeſt all

all my bones with fear and trembling, and my ſoul is ſore afraid. I ſtand aſtoniſhed, when I conſider that the heavens are not pure in thy ſight. If thou haſt found wickedneſs in Angels, and haſt not pardoned them, what ſhall become of me? Stars fell from heaven, and what do I preſume that am duſt? They whoſe works ſeemed commendable, fell into the loweſt miſery: and I have ſeen them, that did eat the bread of angels, to be delighted with the husks of ſwine.

2. There is therefore no ſanctity, if thou, O Lord, withdraweſt thy hand. No wiſdom availeth, if thou ceaſeſt to govern. No ſtrength helpeth, if thou leaveſt off to defend. No chaſtity is ſecure, if thou doſt not protect it. No cuſtody of our own profitable, if thy ſacred watchfulneſs be not preſent. For, if we be left of thee, we ſink and periſh: but if thou vouchſafeſt to viſit us, we are raiſed up and live. We are inconſtant, but by thee we are eſtabliſhed: we wax cold, but by thee we are enflamed.

3. O how meanly and humbly ought I to think of my ſelf! how little, yea nothing ought I to eſteem it, if I ſeem to have any good! O Lord, with what profound humility ought I to ſubmit my ſelf to thy bottomleſs judgments: where I find my ſelf to be nothing elſe, but nothing, and nothing! O unmeaſurable weight! O ſea that can never be paſſed over,

over, where I find my ſelf only and wholly nothing! Where then is the lurking hole of glory? Where is the confidence conceived of virtue? All vain glorying is ſwallowed up in the deep of thy judgments over me.

4. What is all fleſh in thy ſight? Shall the clay glory againſt him that frameth it? How can he be lifted with vain words, whoſe heart is truly ſubject to God? All the world cannot lift him up whom the Truth hath ſubjected unto it ſelf? neither ſhall he be moved with tongues of all his praiſers, that hath ſetled his whole hope in God. For as for them that ſpeak, behold, they all are nothing: they ſhall paſs away with the ſound of their words: but the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever.

CHAP. XV.

How we are to ſtand affected, and what we are to ſay, in every thing which we deſire.

Chriſt. Son, ſay thus in every thing, Lord, if it be pleaſing unto thee, let this be done in this ſort; Lord, if it be to thy honour, let this be done in thy name; Lord, if thou ſeeſt it expedient for me, and alloweſt it to be profitable, then grant unto me, that I may uſe this unto thine honour. But if thou knoweſt it will be hurtful unto me, and not profitable to the health of my ſoul, take away this deſire from me. For every deſire proceedeth

ceedeth not from the holy Ghoſt, though it ſeem unto man right and good. It is hard to judge rightly whither a good Spirit or the contrary drive thee to deſire this or that; or whether alſo by thine own ſpirit thou be moved thereunto. Many are deceived in the end, who at the firſt ſeemed to be led by a good Spirit.

2. Always therefore, whatſoever occurreth unto thy mind to be deſired, let it be deſired and prayed for in the fear of God and with humilty of heart: and above all thou oughteſt to commit the whole unto me with reſignation of thy ſelf, and thou oughteſt to ſay, Lord thou knoweſt what is beſt, let this or that be done as thou pleaſeſt. Give what thou wilt, and how much thou wilt, and when thou wilt. Deal with me as thou thinkeſt good, and as beſt pleaſeth thee, and is moſt for thy honour. Set me where thou wilt, and deal with me in all things according to thy will. I am in thy hand; turn me, and turn me again which way ſoever thou pleaſe. Behold I am thy ſervant, prepared for all things: for I deſire not to live unto my ſelf, but unto thee: and O that I could do it worthily and perfectly!

A prayer for the fulfilling of the will of God.

3. Grant me thy grace O moſt gra-

cious Jesus, that it may be with me, and labour with me, and persevere with me until the end. Grant me always to desire and will that which is most acceptable unto thee, and best pleaseth thee. Let thy will be mine, and let my will ever follow thine, and agree perfectly with it. Let my will and nill be all one with thine, and let me not will or nill any thing else, but what thou willest or nillest.

3. Grant that I may die to all things that are in the world, and to love to be contemned for thy sake and not to be known in this world. Grant that above all things that can be desired, I may rest in thee, and may quiet my heart in thee. Thou art the true peace of the heart, thou art the only rest; out of thee all things are troublesom and unquiet. In this very peace, that is, in thee, the one chiefest eternal Good, I will sleep and rest. Amen.

CHAP. XVI.

That true comfort is to be sought in God alone.

WHatsoever I can desire or imagine for my comfort, I look not for it here, but hereafter. For if I should alone have all the comforts of the world, and might enjoy all the delights thereof, it is certain that they could not long endure.

Where-

Wherefore my ſoul, thou canſt not be fully comforted, nor have perfect delight but in God, the comforter of the poor, and the helper of the humble. Expect a while, O my ſoul, expect the divine promiſe and thou ſhalt have abundance of all good things in heaven. If thou deſire inordinatly the things that are preſent, thou ſhalt loſe the celeſtial and eternal. Uſe temporal things, and deſire eternal. Thou canſt not be filled with any temporal goods, becauſe thou art not created to enjoy them.

2. Although thou ſhouldeſt enjoy all created good, yet couldſt thou not be happy thereby nor bleſſed; but in God, that hath created all things, thy whole beatitude and happineſs conſiſteth; not ſuch as is ſeen, and commended by the fooliſh lovers of the world, but ſuch as the good and faithful ſervants of Chriſt expect, and the ſpiritual and pure in heart, whoſe converſation is in heaven, ſometimes have a fore-taſte of. Vain and ſhort is all humane comfort. Bleſſed and true is the comfort which is received inwardly from the Truth. A Religious man every where carrieth with him Jeſus his comforter, and ſaith unto him. Be preſent with me Lord Jeſus in every place and time. Let this be my comfort, to be willing to want all humane comfort. And if thy comfort be wanting, let thy will and juſt proving of

me be unto me as the greateſt comfort for thou wilt not be angry always, neither wilt thou threaten forever.

CHAP. XVII.

That all our care is to be placed in God.

Chriſt. Son, ſuffer me to do with thee what I pleaſe. I know what is expedient for thee. Thou thinkeſt as man; thou judgeſt in many things as humane affection perſwadeth thee.

Chriſtian. Lord, what thou ſayeſt is true. Thy care for me is greater than all the care that I can take for my ſelf. For he ſtandeth very totteringly, that caſteth not his whole care upon thee. Lord, ſo that my will may remain right and firm towards thee, do with me whatſoever it ſhall pleaſe thee. For it cannot be but good whatſoever thou doeſt with me.

2. If it be thy will I ſhould be in darkneſs, be thou bleſſed: and if it be thy will I ſhould be in light, be thou again bleſſed. If thou vouchſafeſt to comfort me, be thou bleſſed: and if thou wilt afflict me, be thou ever equally bleſſed.

Chriſt. Son, Thus thou oughteſt to be minded, if thou wilt walk with me. Thou muſt be as ready to ſuffer, as to rejoyce. Thou oughteſt to be as willing to be poor and needy, as full and rich.

3. *Chriſtian.* Lord, I will willingly ſuffer for thee, whatſoever thy pleaſure is ſhall befall me. I will receive indifferently

ferently from thy hand good and evil, ſweet and ſowre, delightful and ſorrowful, and give thee thanks for all that befalleth me. Keep me from all ſin, and I will neither fear death not hell: ſo as thou doſt not for ever caſt me from thee, nor blot me out of the book of life, what tribulation ſoever befal me ſhall not hurt me.

CHAP. XVIII.

That temporal miſeries after the example of Chriſt, muſt be born patiently.

Chriſt. Son, I deſcended from Heaven for thy Salvation: I took upon me thy miſeries, my own love and not any neceſſity drawing me thereunto; that thou mighteſt learn patience, and not grudgingly bear temporal miſeries. For from the hour of my birth, until my death on the croſs, I was not without ſuffering of grief. I ſuffered great want of temporal things: I often heard many complaints againſt me: I bore patiently ſhame and reproaches: for benefits, I received ingratitude; for miracles, blaſphemies: for heavenly doctrine, reprehenſions.

2. *Chriſtian.* Lord, for that thou wert patient in thy life-time, chiefly fulfilling herein the commandment of thy Father, it is reaſon that I miſerable ſinner ſhould ſhew my ſelf patient according to thy will, and for my ſouls welfare

bear the burden of this corruptible life as long as thou wilt. For although this present life be burdensom, yet notwithstanding it is now by thy grace made very gainful; and by thy example and the footsteps of thy Saints, more plain and tolerable to the weak. Yea, much more confortable also than it was in times past in the old Law when the gate of heaven remained shut, and the way also to heaven seemed darker, when so few took care to seek after thy Kingdom. Neither they also that then were just and such as should be saved, could enter into the heavenly Kingdom, before the satisfaction of thy holy passion and death.

3. O how many and great thanks am I bound to render unto thee, that thou hast vouchsafest to shew unto me and to all the faithful a direct and sure way to thy everlasting Kingdom! For thy life is our way, and by holy patience we go unto thee that art our Crown. If thou hadst not gone before us and taught us, who would have taken care to follow? Alas! how many would stay behind and remain far off, if they beheld not thy noble example! Behold we are yet cold although we have heard of so many of thy wonders, and thy *heavenly* documents: what would become of us, if we had not so great a light *given us*, to follow thee?

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

Of ſuffering of injuries: and who is proved to be truly patient.

Chriſt. What is thou ſayeſt, Son? Ceaſe to complain, conſidering my paſſion, and that of my other Saints. Thou haſt not yet made reſiſtance unto blood, It is but little thou ſuffereſt, in compariſon of them that have ſuffered ſo much, were ſo ſtrongly tempted, ſo grievouſly afflicted, ſo many ways tried and exerciſed. thou oughteſt therefore to call to mind the more heavy ſufferings of others, that thou mayeſt the eaſier bear the little adverſities which thou ſuffereſt. And if they ſeem not little unto thee, beware leſt thy impatience be the cauſe thereof. Yet whether they be little or great, endeavour to bear all patiently.

2. How much the better thou diſpoſeſt thy ſelf to ſuffering, ſo much the more wiſely thou doeſt, and ſo much the greater reward ſhalt thou receive: thou ſhalt more eaſily alſo endure it, if both in mind and by exerciſe thou art well prepared thereunto. Do not ſay, I cannot ſuffer theſe things at the hands of ſuch a perſon, nor ſuch things are not to be ſuffered by me; for he hath done me great wrong, and upbraided me with thoſe things which I never thought of: but of another I will willingly ſuffer,

and as I shall see cause. Such a thought is foolish; it considereth not the virtue of patience, nor by whom it shall be crowned? but rather weigheth the persons, and the injuries offered.

3. He is not truly patient, that will not suffer but as much as he thinketh good, and by whom he listeth. But the true patient man mindeth not by whom he is exercised, whether by his Superiours, or some of his equals, or by his inferiours: whether by a good and holy man, or by a perverse and unworthy person. But indifferently from all creatures, how much soever, or how often soever any adversity befalleth him, he taketh all this thankfully as from the hands of God, and esteemeth it a great gain: for that nothing before God, how little soever, so it be suffered for God, shall pass without its reward.

4. Be thou therefore always prepared for the fight, if thou wilt have the victory. Without a combat thou canst not attain unto the crown of patience. If thou wilt not suffer, thou refusest to be crowned. But if thou desirest to be crowned, fight manfully, and endure patiently. Without labour there is no coming to rest, nor without fighting can the victory be obtained.

Christian. Lord, let that be made possible to me by thy grace, which seemeth impossible to me by nature. Thou knowest

knoweſt that I can ſuffer but little, and that I am quickly diſmayed, when a ſmall adverſity ariſeth. Let every exerciſe of tribulation be made amiable unto me, and be welcom for thy name; for to ſuffer and to be troubled for thy ſake, is very profitable for my ſoul.

CHAP. XX.

Of the acknowledging of our own infirmities: and of the miſeries of this life.

Chriſtia. I will confeſs againſt me my unrighteouſneſs, I will confeſs unto thee, O Lord, my infirmities, often it is a ſmall matter that dejecteth and grieveth me. I purpoſe to act with courage, but when a ſmall temptation cometh, it bringeth me into very narrow ſtraits. It is ſometimes a very trifle, from whence great temptations do proceed. And whileſt I think my ſelf ſomewhat ſafe, when I leaſt expect it I find my ſelf ſometimes overcome with a ſmall blaſt.

2. Behold, therefore, Lord, my lowneſs and frailty every way known unto thee. Have mercy on me and deliver me out of the mire that I ſtick not faſt therein, and that I may not for ever remain dejected. This is that which oftimes ſtrikes me at the very heart, and confounds me in thy ſight, for that I am ſo ſubject to fall, and weak in reſiſt-

ing of my passions. And although I do not altogether consent, yet their continual assaults are troublesom and grievous unto me: and it is a very irksome thing to live thus daily in conflict. Hereby my infirmity is made known unto me, for that wicked fancies do always much more easily invade than forsake me.

3. O mighty God of Israel, the zealous lover of faithful souls, let it please thee to consider the labor and sorrow of thy servant, and assist him in all whatsoever he undertaketh. Strengthen me with heavenly strength, lest the old man, the miserable flesh, not fully as yet subject to the spirit, prevail and get the upper hand; against which I ought to fight as long as I breath in this miserable life. Alas, what a kind of life is this, where tribulation and miseries are never wanting! where all is full of snares, and enemies! For when one tribulation or temptation goeth away, another cometh; yea and during the first conflict also, many others come unlooked for, one after another.

4. And how can a life be loved that hath so many embitterments, and is subject to so many calamities and miseries? How is it called a life that begetteth so many deaths and plagues? And yet it is loved, and many seek to delight themselves therein. The world

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is oftentimes blamed that, it is deceitful and vain, and yet it is not easily forsaken, because the desires of the flesh bear so great a sway.

Some things draw us to love it, others to contemn it. To the love of the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life do draw us; but the pains and miseries that do justly follow them cause a hatred and loathsomness thereof.

5. But alas! vile pleasure overcometh the mind which is addicted to the world; and she esteemeth it a delight to be even under thorns, because she hath neither seen nor tasted the sweetness of God, and the inward pleasantness of virtue. But they that perfectly contemn the world, and endeavour to live to God under holy discipline, these are not ignorant of the divine sweetness promised to the true forsakers of the world, and more clearly see how grievously the world erreth, and how it is many ways deceived.

CHAP. XXI.

That we are to rest in God above all his gifts, and benefits.

Christian. Above all things, and in all things, O my soul, thou shalt ever rest in the Lord, for he is the everlasting rest of the Saints. Grant me, O most sweet

sweet and loving Jesus, to rest in thee above all creatures, above all health and beauty, above all glory and honour, above all power and dignity, above all knowledg and subtilty, above all riches and arts, above all joy and gladness, above all fame & praise, above all sweetness and comfort, above all hope and promise, above all desert and desire, above all gifts and presents that thou canst give and impart unto us, above all mirth and jubilee that the mind of man can receive & feel; lastly, above Angels and Archangels and above all the heavenly host, above all visible and invisible things, and above all that thou art not, O my God.

2. For that thou, my Lord God, art best of all: thou alone art most high, thou alone most powerful, thou alone most full and sufficient, thou alone most sweet and solacing, thou alone most lovely and loving, thou alone most noble and glorious above all things, in whom all good things together both perfectly are, and ever have been, and shall be: and therefore it is too little and not sufficient, whatsoever thou bestowest on me besides thy self, or revealest unto me of thy self, or promisest, whilest thou art not seen, and not fully obtained: for surely my heart cannot truly rest nor be fully contented, unless it rest in thee, and surmount all gifts and creatures whatsoever.

3. O

3. O my moſt beloved Bridegroom Jeſus Chriſt, the moſt pure Lover, the governour of all creatures; O that I had the wings of true liberty that I might flie and reſt in thee! O when ſhall it be fully granted me to conſider in quietneſs of mind and ſee how ſweet thou art, my Lord God! When ſhall I fully gather up my ſelf into thee, that by reaſon of my love to thee I may not feel my ſelf, but thee alone, above all ſenſe and feeling, in a manner not known unto every one! but now I oftentimes ſigh, and bear my infelicity with grief, for that many evils occurr in this vale of miſeries, which do often trouble, grieve, and overcloud me; often hinder and diſtract me, allure and intangle me, for that I can have no free acceſs unto thee, nor enjoy thy ſweet embracings wherewith thou ever favoureſt the bleſſed Spirits. O let my ſighs, and manifold deſolations on earth affect thee.

4. O Jeſus, the brightneſs of eternal glory, and comfort of the pilgrime ſoul, with thee is my tongue without voice, and my very ſilence ſpeaketh unto thee. How long doth my Lord delay to come? Let him come unto me his poor ſervant, and make me glad. Let him put forth his hand and deliver miſerable me from all anguiſh. Come, O come; for without thee I ſhall have no joyful day nor hour: for thou art my joy, and

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without thee my table is empty. A wretched creature I am, and in a manner impriſoned and loaden with irons, until thou comforteſt me with the light of thy preſence, and ſetteſt me at liberty, and ſheweſt a friendly countenance unto me.

5. Let others ſeek what they pleaſe inſtead of thee: but for me, nothing elſe doth nor ſhall delight me, but thou only my God, my hope, my everlaſting ſalvation. I will not hold my peace, nor ceaſe to pray, until thy grace return again, and thou ſpeak inwardly unto me.

Chriſt. Behold I am here: behold I come unto thee, becauſe thou haſt called upon me. Thy tears and the deſire of thy ſoul, thy humiliation and the contrition of thy heart, have inclined and brought me unto thee.

Chriſtian. And I ſaid, Lord, I have called thee, and have deſired to enjoy thee, being ready to refuſe all things for thee. For thou firſt haſt ſtirred me up that I might ſeek thee. Bleſſed be thou therefore, O Lord, that haſt ſhewed this goodneſs to thy ſervant, according to the multitude of thy mercies.

6. What hath thy ſervant more to ſay before thee, but that he do greatly humble himſelf in thy ſight, always mindful of his iniquity, and vileneſs? For there is none like unto thee in all whatſoever is wonderful in heaven and earth. Thy

works are very good, thy judgments true, and by thy providence all things are governed. Praiſe therefore and glory be unto thee, O wiſdom of the Father: let my mouth, my ſoul, and all creatures together praiſe and bleſs thee.

CHAP. XXII.

Of the remembrance of the manifold benefits of God.

Chriſtian. Open, O Lord, my heart in thy Law, and teach me to walk in thy Commandments. Grant me to underſtand thy will, and to remember thy benefits as well in general, as in particular with great reverence & diligent conſideration; that henceforward I may be able worthily to give thee thanks. But I know, and confeſs, that I am not able in the leaſt point to give thee due thanks, for the favours which thou beſtoweſt upon me. I am leſs than the leaſt of all thy benefits: and when I conſider thy noble bounty, the greatneſs thereof maketh my ſpirit to faint.

2. All that we have in our ſoul & body, and whatſoever we poſſeſs outwardly, inwardly, naturally or ſupernaturally, are thy benefits, and do ſpeak thee bountiful, merciful, and good, from whom we have received all good things. Although one have received more, another leſs; all notwithſtanding are thine, and with-

without thee even the leaſt cannot be had. He that hath received greater cannot glory of his own deſert, nor exalt himſelf above others, nor inſult over the leſſer: for he is greater and better that aſcribeth leaſt unto himſelf, and is more humble and religious in rendring thanks. And he that eſteemeth himſelf vileſt of all men, and judgeth himſelf moſt unworthy, is fitteſt to receive great bleſſings.

3. And he that hath received fewer, ought not to be ſorry nor take it grievouſly, nor envy them that are enriched with greater ſtore; but attend rather unto thee, and highly praiſe thy goodneſs, for that thou beſtoweſt thy gifts ſo bountifully, ſo freely, and ſo willingly without reſpect of perſons. All things proceed from thee, and therefore in all things thou art to be praiſed. Thou knoweſt what is fit to be given to every one; and why this man hath leſs, and he more, it is not ours but thine to judge, who doſt exactly know what is meet for every one.

4. Wherefore, my Lord God, I eſteem it as a great mercy, not to have much of that which outwardly and in the opinion of men, might ſeem worthy of glory and applauſe: ſo that he who conſidereth the poverty and unworthineſs of his perſon, ought not therefore to conceive grief or ſorrow, or to be thereſore

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troubled, but rather to take great comfort, and to be glad: for that thou O God haſt choſen the poor and humble and the deſpiſed of this world for thy ſelf, and for thy familiar and domeſtick attendants. Witneſſes are thy Apoſtles themſelves, whom thou haſt made Princes in all the earth. And yet they lived without complaint in the world, ſo humble and ſimple, without all malice and deceit, that they alſo rejoyced to ſuffer reproach for thy name, and what the world abhorreth, they embraced with great affection.

5. Nothing therefore ought ſo to rejoyce him that loveth thee and acknowledgeth thy benefits, as thy will in him, and the good pleaſure of thy eternal appointment; wherewith he ought to be ſo contented and comforted, that he would as willingly be the leaſt, as any would wiſh to be the greateſt, and as peaceable and contented in the laſt as in the firſt place: and as willing to be deſpiſed and contemned and to be of no eſteem or account, as to be preferred in honor before all others and to be greater in the world. For thy will and the love of thy glory ought to be preferred before all things, and to comfort him more, and pleaſe him better, than all the benefits which either he hath received or may receive.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

Of four things that bring much peace.

Christ. Son, now I will teach thee the way of peace, and true liberty.

Christian. Do Lord, I beseech thee, as thou saidst, for I shall be very glad to hear it.

Christ. Endeavour, my Son, to do rather the will of another, than thine own. Ever choose rather to have less than more. Always seek the lowest place, and to be inferiour to every one. Wish always and pray, that the will of God may be wholly fulfilled in thee. Behold such a man entreth into the bounds of peace and quietness.

2 *Christian.* Lord, this thy short speech containeth much perfection. It is little in words, but full in sense, and abundant in fruit. For if it could faithfully be kept by me, then should I not so easily be troubled. For as often as I feel my self unquiet and afflicted, I find that I have strayed from this doctrine. But thou that canst do all things, and ever lovest the profiting of my soul, increase in me thy grace, that I may fulfill thy words, and work out mine own salvation.

A prayer against evil thoughts.

My Lord God, be not far from me, my God, have regard to help me: for sundry

ſundry thoughts have riſen up againſt me, and great fears, afflicting my ſoul. How ſhall I paſs through them without hurt? How ſhall I utterly break them?

Chriſt. I, ſaith he, *will go before thee, and will humble the great ones of the earth, I will open the doors of the priſon, and reveal unto thee hidden ſecrets.*

Chriſtian. Do Lord as thou ſayeſt, and let all my evil thoughts fly from before thy face. This is my hope, my only comfort, to fly unto thee in every tribulation, to truſt in thee, to call upon thee from my heart, and to expect patiently thy comfort.

A prayer for enlightning of the mind.

4. Enlighten me O good Jeſus, with a clear-ſhining inward light, and drive away all darkneſs from the habitation of my heart. Repreſs my many wandering thoughts, and utterly break in pieces thoſe temptations which violently aſſault me. Fight ſtrongly for me, and vanquiſh thoſe evil beaſts, I mean thoſe inticing deſires of the fleſh, that ſo peace may be obtained, by thy power, and that abundance of thy praiſe may ſound in the holy Court of a pure conſcience. Command the winds and tempeſts: ſay unto the ſea, Be ſtill; and to the north wind, Blow not; and a great calm ſhall enſue.

5. Send forth thy light and thy truth, that

that they may shine upon the earth: for I am as the earth without form and void, until thou enlighten me. Pour out thy grace from above, let thy heavenly dew distil upon my heart, supply fresh streams of grace, to water the face of the earth, that it may bring forth good and excellent fruit. Lift up my mind which is pressed down by the weight of sins. Draw up my whole desire to heavenly things; that having tasted the sweetness of supernal happiness, it may be irksome to me even to think of earthly vanities.

6. Pluck me and deliver me from all the unlasting comfort of creatures: for no created thing can fully comfort and quiet my desire. Joyn me unto thee with an unseparable band of love for thou even alone dost satisfie him that loveth thee, without thee all things are vain.

CHAP. XXIV.

Of flying curious inquiry of the life of others.

Christ. Son, be not curious, trouble not thy self with idle cares. What is this or that to thee? do thou follow me. For what is it to thee, whether that man be such or no, or whether this man do, or speak this or that? Thou shalt not need to answer for others, but shalt give account of thy self. Why therefore dost thou trouble thy self? Behold I know every one, and do see all things that are under

under the Sun, and do understand how it is with every one: what he thinks, what he would, and at what his intention aims. All things therefore are to be committed unto me; but do thou keep thy self in good peace and let the unquiet be as unquiet as they will. Whatsoever they shall have done, or said, shall fall upon themselves, for they cannot deceive me.

2. Be not careful for the shadow of a great name, or for the familiarity of many; nor for the privat affection of men: for these things both distract and greatly darken the heart. I would willingly utter my words, and reveal my secrets unto thee, if thou didst dilignt ly observe my coming, and didst open the door of thy heart unto me. Be careful and watch in prayer, and humble thy self in all things.

CHAP. XXV.

Wherein the firm peace of the heart, and true spiritual profiting consisteth?

Christ. Son, I have said, *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you.* All do desire peace, but all care not for those things that appertain unto true peace. My peace is with the humble and meek of heart. Thy peace doth consist in much patience. If thou wilt hear me and follow my voice, thou maist enjoy much peace.

Christian.

Christian. What then shall I do, Lord?

Christ. In every thing attend unto thy self what thou doest, and what thou sayest: and direct thy whole intention unto this, that thou maist please me alone, and desire or seek nothing besides me. Of the sayings and doings of others judge nothing rashly: neither do thou entangle thy self with things not committed unto thee: and doing thus, thou shalt be little or seldom troubled.

2. But never to feel any trouble at all, nor to suffer any grief of heart or body, is not the state of this life but of everlasting rest. Think not therefore that thou hast found true peace, if thou feelest no sorrow; nor that then all is well, if thou have no adversary; nor that all is perfect, if all things be done according to thy desire. Neither do thou then esteem highly of thy self, or account thy self to be specially beloved, if thou be in great devotion and sweetness: for by these things a true lover of vertue is not known, neither doth the profiting and perfection of a man consist in these things.

3. *Christian.* Wherein then Lord?

Christ. In offering thy self with all thy heart unto the will of God, not seeking thine own interest, neither in great nor little, neither for a time nor for ever so that thou keepest one and the same countinance with thanksgiving, both in pro-

prosperity and in adversity, weighing all things with an equal balance. If thou be of such courage and so patient in hope, that when inward comfort is withdrawn from thee, thou prepareſt thy heart to ſuffer greater things; and doſt not juſtify thy ſelf, as though thou oughteſt not to ſuffer theſe and ſo great afflictions, but juſtifieſt me in whatſoever I appoint, and praiſeſt my holy name: then thou walkeſt in the true and right way of peace: and thou ſhalt have undoubted hope to ſee my face again with great joy. And if thou attain to the full contempt of thy ſelf; then ſhalt thou enjoy as great abundance of peace, as this thy ſtate of ſojourning in this world is capable of.

CHAP. XXVI.

Of the excellency of a free mind, which humble Prayer ſooner gaineth than Reading.

Chriſtian. Lord, it is the work of a perfect man, never, to ſlack his mind from the attentive thought of heavenly things, and as it were to paſs without care amongſt many cares; not like a dull ſluggard; but by the priviledg of a free mind, adhering to no creature with inordinate affection.

2. I beſeech thee, my moſt gracious God, preſerve me from the cares of this life, leſt I ſhould be too much intangled thereby

thereby: and for the many neceſſities of the body, leſt I ſhould be caught by pleaſure: And from whatſoever is an obſtacle to the ſoul, leſt broken with troubles I ſhould be overthrown. I ſay not from thoſe things that worldly vanity ſo greatly deſireth: but from thoſe miſeries, that as puniſhments and as the common curſe of mortality, do weigh down and hinder the ſoul of thy ſervant, that it cannot enter into freedom of ſpirit, as often as it would.

3. O my God, the ineffalible ſweetneſs, embiter unto me all carnal comfort, which may draw me away from the love of eternal things, and may wickedly allure me to it ſelf by the beholding of ſome preſent delightſome good. Let me not be overcome, O Lord, let me not be overcome by fleſh and blood. Let not the world and the ſhort glory thereof deceive me. Let not the Devil and his ſubtil fraud ſupplant me. Give me ſtrengh to reſiſt, patience to ſuffer, and conſtancy to preſerve. Give me inſtead of all the comforts of the world, the moſt ſweet unction of thy Spirit, and in lieu of carnal love pour into my ſoul the love of thy name.

4. Behold, meat, drink, clothes, & other neceſſaries for the maintenance of the body, are burdenſome unto a fervent ſpirit. Grant me to uſe ſuch refreſhments moderatly, and not to be intan-

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gled with an over great desire of them. It is not lawfull to cast away all things, for that nature is to be sustained: but to desire superfluities, and those things that are rather pleasurable, thy holy law forbiddeth: for otherwise the flesh would rebell against the spirit. Herein, I beseech thee, let thy hand govern me, and teach me, that I may not exceed.

CHAP. XXVII.

That private love most hindereth from the chiefest Good.

Christ. Son, thou oughtest to give all for all, and to retain nothing of thy self. Know, that the love of thy self doth hurt thee more than any thing in the world. According to the love and affection thou beares't them, so doth every thing cleave unto thee more or less. If thy love be pure, simple, and well ordered, thou shalt be free from the bondage of things. Covet not that which thou mayest not have. Be not willing to have that which may hinder thee and deprive thee of inward liberty. It is strange that thou committest not thy self wholly unto me, from the bottom of thy heart, with all things that thou canst desire or have.

2. Why dost thou consume thy self with vain grief? Why art thou tired with needless cares? stand to my good will,

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at all. If thou ſeekeſt this or that, a
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availeth little if the ſpirit of fervour
wanting; neither ſhall that peace wh
is ſought abroad long continue, if
ſtate of thy heart be deſtitute of a t
foundation: that is, unleſs thou ſt
ſtedfaſt in me, thou mayeſt chan
but not better thy ſelf. For when
caſion doth happen, thou ſhalt find
only thoſe things which thou ſough
to fly, but a great deal more.

*A prayer for purging the heart, an
obtaining of heavenly wiſdom.*

4. *Chriſtian.* Strengthen me, O G
by the grace of thy holy Spirit. G
me to be ſtrengthened in my inw
m

man, and to empty my heart of all unprofitable care and anguiſh; not to be drawn away with the ſundry deſires of any thing either mean or precious, but to look upon all things as paſſing away, and that my ſelf do alſo paſs away together with them, for nothing is permanent under the Sun, where all things are vanity and vexation of ſpirit. O how wiſe is he that ſo conſidereth them!

5. Grant me, Lord, heavenly wiſdom, that I may learn above all things to ſeek and find thee, above all things to reliſh thee, and to love thee, and to think of all other things as they are, according to the diſpoſal of thy wiſdom. Grant me prudently to avoid him that flatters me, and to ſuffer patiently him that contradicts me. For it is a great part of wiſdom not to be moved with every blaſt of words; nor to give ear to an ill flattering *Syren*; for ſo we ſhall go on ſecurely in the way which we have begun.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Againſt the tongues of Slanderers.

Chriſt. Son, take it not grievouſly if ſome think evil of thee, and ſpeak that which thou wouldſt not willingly hear. Thou oughteſt to judge the worſt of thy ſelf, and to think no man weaker than thy ſelf. If thou doſt walk ſpiritually, thou wilt not much eſteem of flying words. It is no ſmall wiſdom to keep ſilence in an evil time, and inwardly to

run to me, and not to be troubled with the judgement of men.

2. Let not thy peace be in the tongues of men: For whether they interpret well or evil, thou art not therefore another man. Where is true peace, and true glory? Is it not in me? And he that coveteth not to please men, nor feareth to displease them, shall enjoy much peace. From inordinate love and vain fear ariseth all disquietness of heart and distraction of the mind.

CHAP. XXIX.

How we ought to call upon God, and bless him when tribulation draweth near.

Christian, Blessed (O Lord) be thy name for ever; since it pleaseth thee that this temptation and tribulation should come upon me. I cannot flie it but have need to flie to thee that thou mayest help me, and turn it to my good. Lord I am now afflicted, and it is not well with me. I am much troubled with this present suffering. And now dear Father, what shall I say? I am caught amidst straits, save me from this hour. But therefore came I into this hour, that thou mayest be glorified, when I shall be greatly humbled, and by thee delivered. Let it please thee Lord, to deliver me: for, poor wretch that I am, what can I doe; and whither shall I go without

thee? Grant patience Lord, even this time alſo. Help me my God, and then I will not fear how grievouſly ſoever I be afflicted.

2. And now in theſe my troubles what ſhall I ſay? Lord, thy will be done; I have well deſerved to be afflicted and grieved. Surely I ought to bear it: and O that I could bear it with patience, untill the tempeſt be paſſed over, and it become calm! But thy omnipotent hand is able to take even this temptation from me, and to aſſwage the violence thereof, that I utterly ſink not under it, as oftentimes heretofore thou haſt done unto me, O my God, my mercy. And how much the more hard it is to me, ſo much the more eaſie is this *change of the right hand of the moſt High.*

CHAP. XXX.

Of craving the divine aid, and confidence of recovering grace.

Chriſt. Son, I am the Lord that giveth ſtrength in the day of tribulation. Come unto me when it is not well with thee. This is that which moſt of all hindereth heavenly conſolation, that thou art ſlow in turning thy ſelf unto prayer. For before thou doſt earneſtly pray unto me, thou ſeekeſt in the mean while many comforts, and delighteſt thy ſelf in outward things. And hence it

comes to paſs that all doth little profit thee, untill thou conſider that I am he that deliver thoſe that truſt in me, and that out of me there is neither powerful help, nor profitable counſel, nor laſting remedy. But now thou having recovered breath after the tempeſt, gathers ſtrength again in the light of my mercies: for I am at hand, ſaith the Lord, to repair all, not only entirely, but alſo abundantly and in a very plentifull meaſure.

2. Is there any thing hard to me? Or am I like unto him that promiſeth and performeth not? Where is thy faith? Be firm and conſtant. Take courage and be patient; comfort will come to thee in due time. Wait, wait for me, I will come and heal thee. It is a temptation that vexeth thee, and a vain fear that affrighteth thee. What elſe doth the care for future contingencies bring thee, but ſorrow upon ſorrow? *Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.* It is a vain and unprofitable thing to be grieved, or to rejoyce for future things, that perhaps will never come to paſs:

3. But it is incident to man, to be deluded with ſuch imaginations: and a ſign of a weak mind to be ſo eaſily drawn away by the ſuggeſtion of the enemy. For he careth not ſo he delude and deceive thee, whether it be true or falſe which he propoſeth: whether he ove

overthrow thee with the love of preſent, or the fear of future things. Let not therefore thy heart be troubled, neither let it fear. Believe in me, and put thy truſt in my mercy. When thou thinkeſt thy ſelf fartheſt off from me, oftentimes I am neareſt unto thee. When thou judgeſt that almoſt all is loſt, then oftentimes the greateſt advantage of gaining is at hand. All is not loſt when any thing falleth out contrary. Thou muſt not judge according to that which thou feeleſt for the preſent: nor ſo take, or give thy ſelf over to any grief from whence ſoever it cometh, as though all hope of delivery were quite gone.

4. Think not thy ſelf wholly left, although for a time I have ſent thee ſome tribulation, or withdrawn thy deſired comfort: for this is the way to the Kingdom of heaven. And without doubt it is more expedient for thee and the reſt of my ſervants, that ye be exerciſed with adverſities, than that ye ſhould have all things according to your deſires. I know the ſecret thoughts of thy heart, and that it is very expedient for thy welfare, that thou be left ſometimes without taſte *of ſpiritual ſweetneſs, and in a dry condition* leſt perhaps thou ſhouldeſt be puffed up with thy proſperous eſtate, and ſhouldeſt pleaſe thy ſelf in that which thou art not. That which I have given I can take away; and reſtore it again when I pleaſe.

5. When I give it, it is mine, when I withdraw it, I take not any thing that is thine; for mine is every good and every perfect gift. If I send thee affliction, or any Cross whatsoever, repine not, nor let thy heart fail thee: I can quickly succour thee; and turn all thy heavinesse into joy. Nevertheless I am righteous, and greatly to be praised when I deal thus with thee.

6. If thou be wise, and considereſt this rightly, thou wilt never mourn so dejectedly for any adversity that befalleth thee, but rather rejoyce and give thanks, yea, account this thy only joy that afflicting thee with sorrows, I do not spare thee. *As my Father hath loved me, I also love you*, said I unto my beloved Disciples; whom certainly I sent not out to temporal joyes, but to great conflicts: not to honours; but to contempts: not to idleneſs, but to labours: not to reſt, but to bring forth much fruit with patience. My Son, remember theſe words.

CHAP. XXXI.

Of the contempt of all creatures, to find out the Creatour.

Christian. Lord, I stand in need of yet greater grace, that I may reach to that pitch, as that nor man nor any creature may be a let unto me. For as long as any thing detains me, I cannot freely

freely take my flight unto thee. He desired to flie freely that said, *Who will give me wings like a dove, and I will flie and be at rest?* What thing more quiet than the single eye? And what more free, than he that desireth nothing upon earth? Man ought therefore to pass over all creatures, and perfectly to forsake himself, and to remain in excess of mind, and to see that thou the Creatour of all things, hast nothing amongst creatures like unto thee. And unless a man be freed from *the affection of* all creatures, he cannot with freedom of mind attend unto divine things. And for this cause there are so few contemplative men to be found, for that few can wholly withdraw themselves from things created and perishing.

2. But to do this there is need of much grace which may raise up the soul, and enravish it above it self. And unless a man be raised up in spirit, and freed from all creatures, and wholly united unto God; whatsoever he knoweth, and whatsoever he hath, is of little account. A long while shall he be little, and lie grovelling below, that esteemeth any thing great, but the one only infinite and eternal Good. For whatsoever is not God, is nothing, and ought to be accounted as nothing. There is great difference between the wisdom of an illuminated and religious man, and the

knowledge of a learned and studious Clerk. For more noble is that learning which floweth from above from the divine influence, than that which is painfully gotten by the wit of man,

3. There are many that desire contemplation, but they endeavor not to practise those things that are required thereunto. Another great let is this, That we rest in signs and sensible things, and take little care about the perfect mortification of our selves. I know not what it is, nor by what spirit we are led, nor what we pretend, we that seem to be called spiritual, that we take so much pains and so great care for transitory and low things, and scarce or seldom think of our own inward concernments, with the full recollection of our minds.

4. Alas, presently after a slight recollection, we break out again, and weigh not our words with diligent examination. We mind not where our affections lie; nor bewail the impurity that is in all our actions. For all flesh had corrupted his way, and therefore did that general flood ensue. Sith our inward affection then is much corrupted, it must needs be that our actions proceeding thence be corrupted, as a sign of the want of inward vigor. From a pure heart proceedeth the fruit of a good life.

5. We ask how much one hath done; but how virtuously or vigorously it was done,

done, is not ſo diligently conſidered. We inquire whether he be ſtrong, rich, beautiful, handſome, a good writer, a good ſinger, or a good laborer, but how poor he is in ſpirit, how patient and meek, how religious and ſpiritual, is ſeldom ſpoken of. Nature reſpecteth the outward things of man, Grace turneth it ſelf to the inward. That is often deceived: This hath her truſt in God, to the end ſhe be not deceived.

CHAP. XXXII.

Of denial of our ſelves, and forſaking all inordinate deſires.

Chriſt. Son, thou canſt not poſſeſs perfect liberty, unleſs thou wholly deny thy ſelf. All ſuch are fettered and in bondage, as ſeek their proper intereſt wholly, and are lovers of themſelves, covetous, curious, wanderers, always ſeeking pleaſure, and not the things of *Ieſus Chriſt*; but oftentimes deviſing and framing that which will not continue; for all that is not of God, ſhall periſh. Keep this ſhort and compleat ſaying: *Forſake all, and thou ſhalt find all. Leave thy inordinate deſires, and thou ſhalt find reſt.* Conſider this well, and when thou haſt fulfilled it, thou ſhalt underſtand all.

2. *Chriſtian.* Lord, this is not one days work, nor childrens ſport, yea, in this ſhort

short word all the perfection of religious persons is included.

Christ. Son, thou must not go back, nor straightways be dejected, when thou heareſt of the way of the perfect; but rather be ſtirred up to higher things, or at leaſt in deſire ſigh after them. I would it were ſo well with thee, and thou wert come up to this pitch, that thou wert no longer a lover of thy ſelf, but didſt ſtand meerly at my beck, and at his whom I have appointed a Father over thee: then thou ſhouldſt exceedingly pleaſe me, and all thy life would paſs away in joy and peace. Thou haſt yet many things to forſake, which unleſs thou wholly reſign up unto me, thou ſhalt not attain to that which thou deſireſt. *I counſel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayeſt become rich.* That's Heavenly wiſdom, which treadeth under foot all baſe and earthly things. Set little by earthly wiſdom, and care not fondly to pleaſe others or thy ſelf.

3. I ſaid, that the mean things muſt be bought with precious things, and ſuch as were with men of great eſteem. For the true heavenly wiſdom ſeemeth mean and of ſmall account, and is ſcarce thought of by men: For that eſteemeth not highly of it ſelf, nor ſeeketh to be magnified upon earth; many praiſe it from the teeth outward, but in their life they are far from it; yet is

it

it the precious Pearl which is hidden from many.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Of inconſtancy of heart, and of directing our final intentions unto God.

Chriſt. Son, truſt not to thy preſent affection; for it will quickly be changed into another thing. As long as thou liveſt, thou art ſubject to mutability, even againſt thy will: ſo that now thou art merry, now ſad; now quiet, now troubled; now devout, now undevout; now diligent, now ſlow; now grave, now light. But he that is wiſe and well inſtructed in the ſpirit, ſtandeth faſt upon theſe mutable things; not heeding what he feeleth in himſelf, or which way the wind of inſtability bloweth; but that the whole intention of his mind may tend to the right and beſt end. For thus he may continue one, and the ſelf ſame, and unſhaken in the midſt of ſo many various events, directing continually the ſingle eye of his intention unto me.

2. And how much purer the eye of the intention is, with ſo much the more conſtancy doth he paſs through the ſeveral kinds of ſtorms. But in many things the eye of a pure intention waxeth dimſighted, for it quickly looketh upon ſome delightſome object that it meeteth withal: And it is rare to find one that is wholly

wholly free from all blemish of self-seeking. So the Jews in times past came into *Bethany* to *Martha* and *Mary*, not for *Iesus* alone, but to see *Lazarus* also. The eye of our intention therefore is to be purged, that it may be single and right, and to be directed unto me, beyond the manifold diversity of all mediums, and whatsoever earthly objects come between.

CHAP. XXXIV.

That God is sweet, above all things, and in all things, to him that loveth.

Christian. Behold, my God, and all things. What would I have more, and what more happy thing can I desire? O sweet and savory word! but to him that loveth the Word, not the world, nor those things that are in the world, *My God, and all things.* Enough is said to him, that understandeth: and to him that loveth, it is pleasant to repeat it often. For when Thou art present, all things do yield delight; but when thou art absent, every thing becomes irksom. Thou givest quiet of heart and much peace, and pleasant joy. Thou makest us think well of all things, and praise thee in all things: neither can any thing please long without thee: but if it be pleasant and grateful, thy grace must be present, and it must be seasoned with

with the ſweetneſs of thy wiſdom.

2. What is not ſavory unto him, to whom thou art pleaſing? And whom thou delighteſt not, what can be pleaſant to him? but the wiſe of this world, and they that reliſh the things of the fleſh, come ſhort of thy wiſdom: for in the world is much vanity, and in the fleſh is death. But they that follow thee by the contempt of worldly things, and mortification of the fleſh, are proved to be truly wiſe: For they are changed from vanity to truth, from the fleſh to the ſpirit. Theſe reliſh God; and what good ſoever is found in creatures, they wholly refer unto the praiſe of their Maker. Notwithſtanding great, yea, very great is the difference between the ſweetneſs of the Creator, and of the creature, of eternity and of time, of light uncreated, and of light inlightned.

3. O thou Everlaſting Light, ſurpaſſing all created lights, dart the beams of thy brightneſs from above, which may pierce all the moſt inward parts of my heart: Purifie, rejoyce, inlighten and inliven my ſpirit, with all the powers thereof, that I may cleave unto thee with abundance of joy and triumph. O when will that bleſſed and deſired hour come, that I may be filled with thy preſence, and thou mayſt be unto me all in all! As long as this is not granted me, I ſhall not have full joy. Alas! the old man yet liveth

liveth in me, he is not wholly crucifi
he is not perfectly dead. He doth as ye
luſt ſtrongly againſt the ſpirit, and ſtir-
reth up inward wars, and ſuffereth
not the kingdom of my ſoul to be
in peace.

4. But thou that ruleſt the power of
the Sea, and ſtilleſt the riſing of the
waves thereof, ariſe and help me; ſca-
ter the people that deſire war, deſtroy
them in thy might, diſplay thy great-
neſs, and let thy right hand be glorified,
for there is no hope nor refuge for me,
but in thee my Lord God.

CHAP. XXXV.

That there is no ſecurity from temptation in this life.

Chriſt. Son, there is no ſecurity in
this life: As long as thou liveſt,
thou ſhalt always have need of ſpiritual
armor. Thou liveſt among enemies, and
art aſſaulted on the right hand, and on
the left. If therefore thou defendeſt not
thy ſelf on every ſide with the ſhield of
patience, thou canſt not be long un-
wounded. Moreover, if thou fix not
thy heart on me with a ſincere will to
ſuffer all things for me, thou canſt not
bear the heat of this battel, nor obtain
the triumphant reward of the Saints in
bliſs. Thou oughteſt therefore manfully
to go through all, and to uſe a ſtrong
hand

hand againſt whatſoever withſtandeth thee. For to him that overcometh, is manna given; but for the negligent, there remains much miſery.

2. If thou ſeekeſt reſt in this world, how wilt thou then attain to everlaſting reſt? Diſpoſe not thy ſelf to much eaſe, but to much patience. Seek true peace, not in earth, but in heaven; not in men, nor in any other creature, but in God alone. Thou oughteſt for the love of God, willingly to undergo all things, even labors, griefs, temptations, vexations, anxieties, neceſſities, infirmities, injuries, detractions, reprehenſions, humblings, ſhame, corrections, and contempts: theſe help to virtue: theſe try a Novice of Chriſt: theſe make the heavenly Crown. I will give an everlaſting reward for a ſhort labor, and infinite glory for tranſitory ſhame.

3. Thinkeſt thou that thou ſhalt always have ſpiritual conſolations at will? My Saints had not ſo, but they had many afflictions, and ſundry temptations, and many diſcomforts: In all which, they did bear up themſelves patiently, and truſted rather in God than in themſelves, knowing that the ſufferings of this time are not condign to the deſerving of future glory. Wilt thou have that ſtraightways, which many after many tears and great labors have hardly obtained? Wait upon the Lord, do manfully,

fully, be of good courage; do not despair, do not flie, but with constancy expose both body and soul for the glory of God. I will reward thee in a most plentifull manner, and I will be with thee in all thy tribulations.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Against the vain judgements of men.

Christ. Son, cast thy heart constantly upon God, and fear not the judgement of men, when thy conscience giveth testimony of thy piety and innocency. It is a good and happy thing to suffer in such a way: neither will it be burdensom to an humble heart, nor to him that trusteth rather in God than in himself. The most part of men are given to talk much, and therefore little heed is to be given them; neither is it possible to satisfie all. Although *Paul* endeavoured to please all in the Lord, and made himself all things unto all, yet with him it was a very small thing that he should be judged of mans judgement.

2. He did for the edification and salvation of others as much as he could, and lay in him; yet could he not hinder, but that he was sometimes judged and despised by others. Therefore he committed all to God, who knew all; and he defended himself with patience and

and humility againſt evil tongues, and ſuch as thought vanities and lies, and ſpake what they liſted: Yet ſometimes notwithſtanding he anſwered, leſt the weak ſhould be offended by his ſilence.

3. Who art thou that feareſt a mortal man? To day he is, and to morrow he is not ſeen. Fear God, and thou ſhalt not need to fear the terrors of men. What harm can the words or injuries of any do thee? He rather hurteth himſelf than thee; neither can he avoid the judgment of God, whoſoever he be. Have thou God before thine eyes, and contend not with complaining words. And if for the preſent thou ſeemeſt to be worſted, and to ſuffer ſhame without deſert; do not therefore repine, neither do thou leſſen thy crown by thy impatience, but rather lift up thy eyes to me in heaven, who am able to deliver thee from all ſhame and wrong, and to render to every one according to their works.

CHAP. XXXVII.

Of a full and pure reſignation of our ſelves, for the obtaining freedom of heart.

Chriſt. Son, forſake thy ſelf, and thou ſhalt find me. Make no ſelf reſpecting choice of any thing, appropriate nothing to thy ſelf, and thou ſhalt ever be a gainer. For greater grace ſhall be given thee,

thee, when thou doſt perfectly reſign thy ſelf, and not turn back to take thy ſelf again.

Chriſtian. Lord, how often ſhall I reſign my ſelf? and wherein ſhall I forſake my ſelf?

Chriſt. Always, and every hour, as well in little things as in great. I do except nothing, but do require that thou be naked and void of all things. Otherwiſe how canſt thou be mine, and I thine, unleſs both within and without, thou be free from all ſelf will? And how much the ſooner thou doſt this, ſo much the better it will be with thee; and how much the more fully and ſincerely thou doeſt it, ſo much the more ſhalt thou pleaſe me, and ſo much the more ſhalt thou gain.

2. Some there are that reſign themſelves, but with ſome exception; for they put not their whole truſt in God, and therefore they ſtudy how to provide for themſelves. Some alſo at the firſt do offer all, but afterwards being aſſailed with temptations, do return again to that which they had left, and therefore they go not forward in the way of virtue. Theſe ſhall not attain to the true liberty of the pure heart, nor to the favor of my ſweeteſt familiarity, unleſs they firſt make an entire reſignation, and a daily oblation of themſelves unto me. For without this there neither is nor can be the fruitive union with me. 3. I

3. I have often ſaid unto thee, and now again I ſay the ſame, Forſake thy ſelf, reſign thy ſelf, and thou ſhalt enjoy much inward peace. Give all for all; ſeek nothing, require back nothing, abide purely, and with a firm confidence in me, and thou ſhalt enjoy me; thou ſhalt be free in heart, and darkneſs ſhall not have power over thee. Let this be thy whole endeavour, let this be thy prayer, let this be thy deſire, That being ſtript of all ſelfneſs, thou mayeſt even nakedly follow naked Jeſus; and dying to thy ſelf, mayeſt live eternally to me. Then ſhall all vain imaginations, evil perturbations, and ſuperfluous cares flie away; then ſhall immoderate fear leave thee, and inordinate love ſhall die.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

Of good Government in outward things, and of recourſe to God in dangers.

Chriſt. Son, thou oughteſt with all diligence to procure, that in every place and action or external buſineſs, thou be inwardly free and maſter of thy ſelf, and that all things be under thee, and thou not under them; that thou mayeſt be lord and maſter of thy actions, not a ſervant or a hireling, but rather a free-man, and a true Hebrew, paſſing into the lot and freedom of the ſons of God, who ſtanding upon the things that

that are present, view the things which are eternal; who look on transitory things with the left eye, and with the right do behold the things of Heaven; whom temporal things cannot draw to cleave unto them, but they rather draw temporal things to serve them, and to be disposed by them in such a way as they are ordained by God, and appointed by the Creator of all, who hath left nothing in his creatures without due order.

2. If thou remain stedfast in all events, and dost not weigh by the outward appearance, nor with a carnal eye, the things which thou seest and heares; but presently in every affair, dost enter with *Moses* into the Tabernacle to ask counsel of the Lord; thou shalt sometimes hear the Divine Oracle, and shalt return instructed concerning many things, both present and to come. For *Moses* had always recourse to the Tabernacle for the deciding of doubts and controversies, and fled to the help of prayer, for a defence against the iniquity and dangers of men. So oughtest thou in like manner to flie to the closet of thy heart, earnestly craving the Divine favour. For the Scripture testifieth, that therefore was *Joshua* and the Children of *Israel* deceived by the *Gibeonites*, because they asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord, but giving too lightly credit to their fair words,

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were deluded with their counterfeit piety.

CHAP. XXXIX.

That a man be not over-earneſt in his affairs.

Chriſt. Son, always commit thy cauſe to me, I will diſpoſe well of it in due time: wait for my ordering of it, and thou ſhalt find it will be for thy good.

Chriſtian. Lord, I do moſt willingly commit all unto thee, for my care can avail little. O that I cleaved not too much to future events, but offered my ſelf with all readineſs of mind to thy good pleaſure.

2. *Chriſt.* Son, oftentimes a man doth earneſtly labour for that which he deſireth, and when he hath gotten it, he beginneth to be of another mind; for mans affections do not long continue fixed on one thing, but do paſs from one to another. It is therefore no ſmall thing for a man to forſake himſelf even in the ſmalleſt things.

3. The true ſpiritual profiting of a man conſiſteth in the denying of himſelf: And he that is thus reſigned, liveth in great freedom and ſecurity. But the old enemy, who always ſets himſelf againſt all that are good, ceaſeth at no time from tempting, but day and night lieth grievouſly in wait, to caſt the unwary, if he can, into the ſnare of deceit. Therefore, *Watch and pray, ſaith*

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our Lord, that ye enter not into temptation.

CHAP. XL.

That man hath no good of himſelf nor any thing whereof he can glory.

Chriſtian. Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him, or the ſon of man, that thou viſiteſt him! What hath man deſerved, that thou ſhouldſt favour him? Lord, what cauſe have I to complain, if thou forſake me? Or if thou doeſt not that which I deſire, what can I juſtly ſay againſt it? Surely, this I may truly think and ſay, Lord, I am nothing, I have nothing that is good of myſelf; but in all things I am defective, and do ever tend to nothing: And unleſs thou help me, and doſt inwardly inſtruct me, I become altogether cold, and am diſſolved.

2. But thou, O Lord, art always the ſame, and indureſt for ever; always good, juſt, and holy, doing all things well, juſtly, and holily, and diſpoſing all things with wiſdom. But I that am more ready to go backward than forward, do not ever continue in one eſtate, for ſeven times are paſſed over me; yet doth it ſoon turn to the better, when it ſo pleaſeth thee, and when thou vouchſafeſt to ſtretch forth thy helping hand. For thou alone canſt help me without the aid of man, and ſo ſtrengthen me, that my countenance ſhall be no more changed but

but my heart ſhall be turned to thee alone, and there ſhall reſt.

3. Wherefore if I could once perfectly forſake all humane comfort, either for the attaining of devotion, or for mine own neceſſity, which inforceth me to ſeek after thee, (for none elſe can comfort me) then might I well hope in thy grace, and rejoyce for the gift of new conſolation.

4. Thanks be unto thee, from whence all proceedeth, as often as it goeth well with me: But I am mere vanity and nothing in thy ſight, an unconſtant & weak man. Whereof then can I glory? or for what do I deſire to be eſteemed of? is it not even for nothing? But this is moſt vain. Truly vain glory is an evil plague, and a very great vanity; becauſe it draweth man from true glory, and robbeth him of heavenly grace. For whilſt a man pleaſeth himſelf, he diſpleaſeth thee; whilſt he gapeth after the praiſe of men, he is deprived of true virtues.

5. But the true glory and holy rejoycing is for a man to glory in thee, and not in himſelf; to rejoyce in thy name, & not in his own vertue or ſtrength, nor to delight in any creature, but for thee. Praiſed be thy name, not mine: magnified be thy work, not mine. Let thy holy name be bleſſed, but to me let no part of mens praiſes be given. Thou art my glory, thou art the joy of my heart. In

thee will I glory, and rejoyce all the day: but as for my self, I will not glory, but in my infirmities.

6. Let the Jews seek honor one of another; I will desire this which is from God alone. For all humane glory, all temporal honor, all worldly highness, compared to thy eternal glory, is vanity and folly. O my truth, my mercy, my God, most blessed Trinity, to thee alone be praise, honor, power, and glory for evermore.

CHAP. XLI.

Of the contempt of all temporal honour.

Christ. Son, trouble not thy self, if thou seest others honoured and advanced, and thy self contemned and debased. Lift up thy heart unto me in Heaven, and the contempt of Men on Earth will not grieve thee.

Christian. Lord, we are blind, and quickly seduced with vanity. If I look well into my self, I cannot say that any creature hath done me wrong; and therefore I cannot justly complain of thee.

2. But because I have often and grievously sinned against thee, all creatures do justly take arms against me: for shame and contempt is due unto me, but unto thee praise, honour, and glory. And unless I frame my self with a very good will to be despised and forsaken of all crea-

creatures, and to be esteemed nothing at all; I cannot obtain inward peace and strength, nor be spiritually enlightned, nor fully united unto thee.

CHAP. XLII.

That our peace is not to be placed in men.

Christ. Son, if the peace thou hast with any be grounded upon the opinion which thou hast of him, or upon the account of thine acquaintance with him, thou shalt ever be in an unconstant and enthralled condition: but if thou have recourse unto the everliving and eternal truth, a friend going from thee or dying shall not grieve thee. The love of thy friend ought to be grounded in me; and for me is he to be beloved, whosoever he be whom thou thinkest well of, and is very dear unto thee in this life. No friendship can avail, or continue without me; neither is that love true and pure, which is not knit by me. Thou oughtest to be so dead to such affections of beloved friends, that (forasmuch as appertaineth unto thee) thou shouldest wish to be without all company of men. Man approacheth so much the nearer unto God, by how much the further off he departeth from all earthly comfort: so much the higher also he ascendeth unto God by how much lower he descendeth into himself, and how

much the meaner he is in his own ſight.

2. But he that attributeth any good unto himſelf, hindereth the coming of Gods grace unto him; for the grace of the holy Ghoſt ever ſeeketh an humble heart. If thou couldeſt perfectly annihilate thy ſelf, and empty thy ſelf of all created love; then ſhould I flow into thee with great abundance of grace. When thou caſteſt thy eyes on creatures, the ſight of thy Creator is taken from thee. Learn to overcome thy ſelf in all things, for the love of thy Creator; and then ſhalt thou be able to attain to divine knowledge. How little ſoever the thing be, if it be inordinately loved and regarded; it defileth the ſoul, and hindereth the enjoying of the chiefeſt good.

CHAP. XLIII.

Againſt vain ond ſecular knowledge.

Chriſt. Son, let not the fair ſpeeches and ſubtile ſayings of men move thee. For *the Kingdom of God conſiſteth not in word, but in power.* Obſerve well my words, for they inflame hearts, and inlighten minds, they cauſe compunction, and bring ſundry comforts. Do thou never read to ſhew thy ſelf learned or wiſe; but labour to mortifie thy ſins; for that will profit thee more than the knowledge of many difficult queſtions.

2. When

2. When thou ſhalt have read and known many things; thou oughteſt ever to return to one beginning and principle. I am he, that teacheth man knowledge, and give unto Babes a more clear underſtanding, than can be taught by man. He therefore, to whom I ſpeak ſhall quickly be wiſe, and ſhall profit much in the Spirit. Wo be to them that inquire many curious things of men, and do little mind the way how to ſerve me. The time will come, when the Maſter of maſters ſhall appear, Chriſt the Lord of Angels, to hear the Leſſons of all, that is, to examine the conſciences of every one: and then he will ſearch *Jeruſalem* with a Candle, and the hidden things of darkneſs ſhall be laid open, and the arguings of mens tongues ſhall be ſilent.

3. I am he that in an inſtant do raiſe up the humble mind to underſtand more of the eternal truth, than can be gotten by ten years ſtudy in the Schools: I teach without the noiſe of word, without the confounding of opinions, without ambition of honour, without the ſcuffling of Arguments. I am he that teacheth to deſpiſe earthly things, to loath things preſent, to ſeek the everlaſting, to reliſh the things that are eternal, to flee honours, to ſuffer injuries, to place all hope in me, to deſire nothing out of me, and above all things ardently to love me.

4. For a certain perſon by loving me entirely, learned divine things, and ſpake that which was admirable: he profited more by forſaking all things, than in ſtudying ſubtilties. To ſome I ſpeak common things, to others more ſpecial things; to ſome I appear ſweetly by ſigns and figures, but to ſome I reveal myſteries with much light. The voice of Books is indeed one, but it teacheth not all men alike. For I am the inward teacher, I am the Truth, I am the ſearcher of the heart, the diſcerner of the thoughts, the ſetter forwards of what is good, diſtributing to every one as I judge meet.

CHAP. XLIV.

Of not drawing outward things to our ſelves.

Chriſt. Son, in many things thou oughteſt to be ignorant, and eſteem thy ſelf as dead upon earth, and as one to whom the whole world is crucified. Thou muſt alſo paſs by many things with a deaf ear, and rather think of that which appertaineth to thy peace. It is better for thee to turn thine eyes from what doth miſlike thee, and to leave unto every one his own opinion, than to ſtrive with contentious words. If all ſtand well betwixt thee and God, and if thou haſt his judgement in thy mind, thou ſhalt the more eaſily bear if thou be overcome.

2. *Chri-*

2. *Chriſtian.* O Lord, to what a paſs are we come! Behold, we bewail a temporal loſs, for a little gain we toil and run; and the ſpiritual dammage of our ſoul is forgotten, and hardly at length called to mind. That which little or nothing profiteth, is minded; and that which is chiefly neceſſary, is ſlightly paſſed over, becauſe the whole man doth ſlide down into external things; and unleſs he ſpeedily repent, he lieth immerſt in them, and that willingly.

CHAP. XLV.

That credit is not to be given to all men; and how prone man is to offend in words.

Chriſtian. Help me, O Lord, in my tribulation, for vain is the help of man. How often have I been deceived, finding want of faith where I thought it ſure? And how often have I found faith where I leaſt expected it? It is vain therefore to truſt in men; but the ſalvation of the juſt, O Lord, is in thee. Bleſſed be thou, my Lord God, in all things that befall us. We are weak and inconſtant, quickly deceived, and ſoon changed.

2. Who is he, that in all things ſo warily and circumſpectly keeps himſelf, that he never falls into any deceit or perplexity? But he that truſteth in thee, O Lord, and ſeeketh thee with a ſingle

heart, doth not so easily fall; and if he fall into any tribulation, be he never so much enthralled, yet he shall quickly be either delivered or comforted by thee. For thou wilt not forsake him for ever that trusteth in thee. A friend is rare to be found, that continueth faithful in all his friends distress; but thou, O Lord, thou alone art most faithful at all times, and there is none like unto thee.

3. O how wise was that holy soul that said, My mind is firmly setled and grounded in Christ! if it were so with me, then would not humane fear so easily trouble me, nor the darts of words move me. Who can foresee all things? Who is able to beware before-hand of future evils? If things even foreseen do oftentimes hurt us, how can things unlooked for choose but wound us grievously? But why did I not provide better for my self, miserable wretch? Why also have I so easily given credit to others? But we are men, nothing but frail men, although by many we are reputed and called Angels. To whom shall I give credit, Lord? to whom but to thee? Thou art the Truth that neither dost deceive, nor can be deceived. And on the other side, every man is a liar, weak, unconstant, and subject to fall, especially in words: and therefore we must not easily give credit even to that, which in outward shew seemeth at the first to be right.

4. O wh

4. O with what wiſdom haſt thou warned us to beware of men! And becauſe a mans foes are they of his own houſhold, not to give credit, if one ſhould ſay, *Lo here*, or *Lo there*. I am taught to my coſt, and O that I might thereby encreaſe my care, and not my folly. Be wary ſaith one, be wary, keep to thy ſelf what I tell thee: and whilſt I hold my peace, and think it is ſecret, he cannot keep that ſecret which he deſired ſhould be ſecret, but preſently diſcloſeth me and himſelf, and goeth his way. From ſuch tales and ſuch indiſcreet perſons protect me, O Lord, that I fall not into their hands, nor ever commit ſuch things. Give me to obſerve truth and conſtancy in my words, and remove far from me a deceitful tongue. What I am not willing to ſuffer, I ought by all means to avoid.

5. O how good is it and tending to peace, to be ſilent of others, nor to believe promiſcuouſly all that is ſaid, nor eaſily to report what we have heard; to lay ones ſelf open to few; always to ſeek after thee who art the beholder of the heart; not to be carried about with every wind of words, but to deſire that all things both within and without, be accompliſhed according to the pleaſure of thy will. How ſafe is it for the keeping of Heavenly grace, to fly the ſight of men, and not to ſeek thoſe things that

ſeem to cauſe admiration abroad, but to follow that with all diligence, which bringeth amendment of life and zeal of Godlineſs.

6. To how many hath vertue known and over haſtily commended, been hurtful? How profitable hath grace been kept with ſilence in this mortal life, which is nothing but a temptation and a warfare?

CHAP. XLVI.

Of putting our truſt in God when evil words ariſe.

Chriſt. Son, be conſtant, and put thy truſt in me. For what are words but words? They fly through the air, but hurt not ſo much as a ſtone. If thou be guilty, ſee that thou be not unwilling to amend thy ſelf: if thou be innocent, reſolve to ſuffer this willingly for the ſake of God. It is but a ſmall matter to ſuffer ſometimes a few words, if thou haſt not yet the courage to endure hard ſtripes. And why do ſmall matters go to thy heart, but for that thou art yet carnal, and regardeſt men more than thou oughteſt? Becauſe thou art afraid to be deſpiſed, therefore thou wilt not be reprehended for thy faults, but ſeekeſt the ſhades of excuſes.

2 But look better into thy ſelf, and thou ſhalt ſee that the world is yet alive in thee, and a vain affection to pleaſe men.

men. For when thou ſhunneſt to be humbled and reproved for thy faults, it is evident that thou art neither truly humble, nor truly dead to the world, nor the world crucified to thee. But give diligent ear to my words, and thou ſhalt little regard ten thouſand words ſpoken by men. Behold, if all ſhould be ſpoken againſt thee that could be moſt maliciouſly invented, what would it hurt thee, if thou ſufferedſt it to paſs, and madeſt no more reckoning of it than of a mote? could all thoſe words pluck as much as one hair from thy head?

3. But he that hath no heart in him, nor hath God before his eyes, is eaſily moved with a word of diſpraiſe; when as he that truſteth in me, and affects not to confide in his own judgement, ſhall be free from humane fears. For I am the Judge and the diſcerner of all ſecrets: I know how the matter paſſed: I know him that offered the injury, and him that ſuffereth it. From me hath this proceeded: this hath happened by my permiſſion, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. I ſhall judge the guilty, and the innocent; but by a ſecret judgment I would before hand try them both.

4. The teſtimony of men oftentimes deceiveth: but my judgement is true, it ſhall ſtand and not be overthrown. It is commonly hidden, and not known in every

every thing, but to few: notwithstanding it never erreth, neither can it erre, although to the eyes of the foolish it seems not right. Men ought therefore to have recourse to me in every judgment, and not to lean to their own opinions. For the just man will not be troubled, whatsoever befalleth him from God: and if any thing be wrongfully brought forth against him, he will not much care; neither will he vainly be glad, if by others he be with reason excused. For he considereth that I am he that searcheth the heart and reins, and do judge not according to the outward face, nor humane appearance. For that is oftentimes found culpable in my sight, that in the judgment of men is thought to be commendable.

5. *Christian.* O Lord God, the just judge, strong and patient, thou who knowest the frailty and pravity of man, be thou my strength, and all my trust, for mine own conscience sufficeth me not. Thou knowest that which I know not, and therefore in every reproof I ought to have humbled my self, and to have born meekly: vouchsafe mercifully to pardon me, as often as I have failed herein, and give me again grace of greater sufferance. For thy abundant mercy is more available to me for the obtaining of pardon, than my conceived justice for the defence of my hidden con-

conſcience. Although I know nothing by my ſelf, yet I cannot hereby juſtifie my ſelf; for without thy mercy no man living ſhall be juſtified in thy ſight.

CHAP. XLVII.

That all grievous things are to be endured for life everlaſting.

Chriſt. Son, be not diſmayed with the painful labours which thou haſt undertaken for me, neither be thou wholly diſcomforted for the tribulations which do befall thee; but let my promiſe ſtrengthen and comfort thee in all events. I am able to reward thee infinitely and above all meaſure. Thou ſhalt not long toil here, nor always be preſſed with griefs. Wait a while and thou ſhalt ſee a ſpeedy end of thy evils. There will come an hour, when all labour and trouble ſhall ceaſe. Little and ſhort is all that which paſſeth away with time.

2. Do what thou doſt; labour faithfully in my vineyard, I will be thy reward. Write, read, ſing, mourn, keep ſilence, pray, ſuffer croſſes manfully: life everlaſting is worthy of all theſe, yea, and greater combats. Peace ſhall come in the day which is known unto the Lord, and there ſhall be neither day nor night, to wit, of this time, but everlaſting light, infinite brightneſs, ſtedfaſt peace,

peace, and ſecure reſt. Then thou ſhalt not ſay, *Who ſhall diliver me from the body of this death?* nor cry, *Wo is me, that my ſojourning is prolonged!* For death ſhall be thrown down, and ſalvation ſhall appear which never ſhall have end, there ſhall be no anxiety: but bleſſed joy, ſweet and lovely company.

3. O, if thou hadſt ſeen the everlaſting crowns of the Saints in heaven, and with how great glory they now rejoyce who in times paſt were contemptible to this world, and eſteemed unworthy of life it ſelf; truly thou wouldſt preſently humble thy ſelf even unto the earth; and wouldeſt rather ſeek to be under the feet of all, than to have command ſo much as over one: neither wouldeſt thou deſire the pleaſant days of this life, but rather rejoyce to ſuffer affliction for God, and eſteem it thy greateſt gain to be reputed as nothing amongſt men.

4. O, if thou hadſt a reliſhing of theſe things, and didſt ſuffer them to ſink into the bottom of thy heart, how durſt thou ſo much as once to complain? Are not all painful labours to be endured for everlaſting life? it is no ſmall matter, to loſe or to gain the Kingdom of Heaven. Lift up thy face therefore unto Heaven: behold I, and all my Saints with me, who in this world had great conflicts, do now rejoyce, now are comforted, now are ſecure, now are at reſt and

and ſhall remain with me everlaſtingly in the Kingdom of my Farher.

CHAP. XLVIII.

Of the everlaſting day, and ſhortneſs of this life.

C *Hriſtian.* O moſt bleſſed manſion of the Heavenly City! O moſt clear day of Eternity, which night obſcureth not, but the higheſt Truth ever enlightneth; A day of continual joy, of perpetual quietneſs, and never changing into a contrary ſtate! O that that day would once appear, and all theſe temporal things were at an end! To the Saints it ſhineth gliſtering with everlaſting brightneſs, but to thoſe that are Pilgrims upon earth, it appeareth only afar off, and as it were through a glaſs.

2. The Citizens of Heaven do know how joyfull that day is: But the baniſhed children of *Eve*, bewail the bitterneſs and tediouſneſs of this. The days of this life are ſhort and evil, full of ſorrow and anguiſh; where man is defiled with many ſins, incumbred with many paſſions, diſquieted with many fears, filled with many cares, diſtracted with many curioſities, intangled with many vanities, compaſſed about with many errors, worn away with many labours, vexed with temptations, weakned with pleaſures, tormented with want.

3. O,

3. O, when ſhall theſe evils be at an end! When ſhall I be delivered from the miſerable bondage of ſin! When ſhall I think, O Lord, of thee alone! When ſhall I fully rejoyce in thee! When ſhall I enjoy true liberty without all impediments whatſoever, without all trouble of mind and body! When ſhall I have ſolid peace, ſecure and undiſturbed peace, peace within and without, peace every way aſſured! O good Jeſus when ſhall I ſtand to behold thee! When ſhall I contemplate the glory of thy Kingdom! When wilt thou be unto me *All in all*! O when ſhall I be with thee in thy Kingdom, which thou haſt prepared for thy beloved from all eternity! I am left a poor and baniſhed man in the Land of mine enemies, where there are daily wars and great calamities.

4. Comfort my baniſhment, aſſwage my ſorrow; for my whole deſire fighteth after thee. For all is burdenſome to me whatſoever this world offereth for my comfort. I long to enjoy thee moſt inwardly, but I cannot attain unto it. My deſire is, that I may be wholly given up to heavenly things, but temporal things and unmortified paſſions weigh me down. With the mind I would be above all things, but with the fleſh I am inforced to be ſubject againſt my will. Thus unhappy man that I am, I fight againſt my

my ſelf, and am become grievous to my ſe.., whileſt my ſpirit ſeeke.. to be above, and my fleſh to be below.

5. O what do I inwardly ſuffer, when in my mind I conſider heavenly things, and preſently in my prayers a multitude of carnal imaginations preſent themſelves before me! My God, be not far from me, depart not in thy wrath from thy ſervant. Caſt forth thy lightning, and diſperſe them: ſend out thy darts, and break all the imaginations which my enemy caſts in. Gather in, call home my ſenſes unto thee, make me forget all the things of this world: grant me to caſt away ſpeedily the imaginations of wickedneſs. Succour me, O thou the everlaſting Truth, that no vanity may move me. Come heavenly ſweetneſs and let all impurity fly from before thee. Pardon me alſo, and mercifully forgive me as often as I think upon any thing elſe beſides thee in prayer. I do truly confeſs, that I am wont to be ſubject to many diſtractions: for oftentimes I am not there, where I do corporally ſtand, or ſit, but I am rather there, whither my thoughts do carry me. Where my thoughts is, there am I: there is oftentimes my thought, where my affection is. That quickly offereth it ſelf unto me, which is naturally delightſome, or by cuſtome is pleaſing.

6. And for this cauſe, thou that art Truth

Truth it self hast plainly said. *Where t treasure is, there is also thy heart.* If I lo heaven, I willingly think of heaven things. If I love the world, I rejoyce the felicity of the world, and grieve f the adversity thereof. If I love the fle I shall fancy oftentimes those things th are pleasing to the flesh: If I love th spirit, I delight to think of spiritu things. For whatsoever I love, there do I willingly speak, and hear, and car home with me the forms, *the Ideas an representations* thereof. But blessed that man, that for thee, O Lord, di misseth all creatures, that violently res steth nature, and through fervor of Spi rit crucifieth the lusts of the flesh, that s with a serene conscience, he may offe pure prayer unto thee, and be meet to b admitted into the Angelical quire, a earthly things both outwardly and in wardly being excluded.

CHAP. XLIX.

Of the desire of everlasting life, and how great rewards are promised to those that fight valiantly.

Christ. Son, when thou perceivest the desire of everlasting bliss to be given thee from above, and desirest to depart out of the Tabernacle of this Body, that thou mayest behold my brightness without shadow of turning; ope

open thy heart wide, and receive this holy inſpiration with thy whole deſire. Give greateſt thanks to the heavenly goodneſs, that dealeth with thee ſo favourably, viſiteth thee mercifully, ſtirreth thee up fervently, holdeth thee up powerfully, leſt through thine own weight thou fall down to the things of earth. Neither doſt thou obtain this by thy own thought or endeavour, but by the mere dignation of heavenly grace and divine favour; to the end that thou mayſt make a further progreſs in holineſs, and obtain greater humility, and prepare thy ſelf for future battels, and endeavour to cleave unto me with the whole affection of thy heart, and ſerve me with a fervent deſire.

2. Son, the fire burneth many times, but the flame aſcendeth not up without ſmoak: ſo likewiſe the deſires of ſome men burn towards heavenly things, and yet they are not free from temptation of carnal affection: and therefore it is not altogether purely for the honour of God that which they ſo earneſtly requeſt of him. Such is alſo oftentimes thy deſire, which thou haſt pretended to be ſo ſerious. For that is not pure and perfect, which is tinctured with the love of thine own proper commodity and intereſt.

3. Ask not that which is delightfull and profitable to thee, but that which is acceptable to me, and appertaineth to my

my honour: for if thou judgeſt aright thou oughteſt to prefer and follow my appointment, rather than thine own deſire, or any deſired thing. I know thy deſire, and have heard thy frequent groans. Now thou wouldeſt enjoy the glorious liberty of the Sons of God: now doth the everlaſting habitation, and the heavenly Country repleniſhed with all joy, delight thee; but that hour is not yet come: as yet there is another time, to wit, a time of war, a time of labour and trial. Thou deſireſt to be filled with the chiefeſt good, but thou canſt not attain it for the preſent. I am he, ſaith the Lord whom thou muſt patiently wait for, untill the Kingdom of God doth come.

4. Thou art yet to be tryed upon earth, and to be exerciſed in many things. Comfort ſhall be ſometimes given thee, but the abundant fulneſs thereof ſhall not be granted. Take courage therefore, and be valiant as well in doing as in ſuffering things contrary to nature. Thou oughteſt to put on the new man, and to be changed into another man. Thou muſt oftentimes do that which thou wouldeſt not, and leave undone that thou wouldeſt do. That which is pleaſing to others, ſhall go well forward: that which thou wiſheſt, ſhall not ſpeed. That which others ſay, ſhall be heard: what thou ſayſt, ſhall be nothing regarded.

regarded. Others ſhall ask and ſhall receive: Thou ſhalt ask and not obtain.

5. Others ſhall be great in the praiſe of men, but of thee there ſhall be no ſpeech. To others this or that ſhall be committed, but thou ſhalt be accounted fit for nothing. At this nature will ſometimes be troubled, and it is much if thou beareſt it with ſilence. In theſe and many ſuch like, a faithfull ſervant of the Lord is wont to be tried how he can deny and break himſelf in all things. There is ſcarce any thing, wherein thou haſt had ſuch need to die to thy ſelf, as in ſeeing and ſuffering thoſe things that are contrary to thy will; eſpecially when that is commanded, which ſeemeth unto thee inconvenient, or leſs profitable. And for that thou being placed under authority dareſt not reſiſt higher power, therefore it ſeemeth hard to thee to walk at the beck of another, and to leave all thine own opinion.

6. But conſider, Son, the fruit of theſe labours, the end near at hand, and the reward exceeding great; and thou ſhalt be ſo far from ſuſtaining them grievouſly, that thou wilt take great comfort of thy patience. For in regard of that little of thy will, which now thou willingly forſakeſt, thou ſhalt alwayes have thy will in heaven. There thou ſhalt find all that thou wilt or canſt deſire;

there

there thou ſhalt enjoy all good without fear of loſing it; there ſhall thy will be ever one with me; it ſhall not covet any outward or private thing. There no man ſhall withſtand thee, no man complain of thee, no man hinder thee, nothing come againſt thee: but all things deſired ſhall be there together preſent, and refreſh thy whole affection, and fill it up to the brim. There I will give thee glory for the reproach which here thou ſufferedſt; the garment of praiſe for heavineſs; for the loweſt place a kingly Throne for ever; there ſhall the fruit of obedience appear, the labour of repentance rejoyce, and humble ſubjection ſhall be gloriouſly crowned.

7. Now therefore be humbly obedient unto all, and regard not who ſaid or commanded this; but take great heed, that whether thy Superiour, or thy Inferiour, or thine Equal, require any thing of thee, or do inſinuate their deſire; thou take it all in good part, and endeavour to fulfill it with a ſincere will. Let one ſeek this, another that; let him glory in this, the other in that, and be praiſed a thouſand thouſand times; but do thou neither rejoyce in this, nor in that, but in the contempt of thy ſelf, and only in my good pleaſure and honour. This art thou to wiſh, that whether it be thy life or death, God may be always glorified in thee.

CHAP.

CHAP. L.

How a diſconſolate perſon ought to offer himſelf into the hands of God.

Chriſtian. Lord God, Holy Father, be thou bleſſed both now and for evermore; becauſe as thou wilt, ſo is it done, and what thou doeſt, is good. Let thy ſervant rejoyce in thee, not in himſelf nor in any thing elſe; for thou alone art the true gladneſs, thou art my hope and my crown, thou art my joy and my honour, O Lord. What hath thy ſervant, but what he hath received from thee, even without any merit of his? Thine is all that thou haſt given, and whatſoever thou haſt made. I am poor, and in labours from my youth: and ſometimes my ſoul is ſorrowful even unto tears; ſometimes alſo it is troubled in it ſelf by reaſon of the evils which hang over mine head.

2. I long after the joy of peace, I earneſtly crave the peace of thy children that are fed by thee in the light of thy comfort. If thou give peace, if thou pour into my heart holy joy; the ſoul of thy ſervant ſhall be full of gladneſs, and ſhall become devout in thy praiſe: but if thou withdraw thy ſelf, (as many times thou doeſt) he will not be able to run the ways of thy commandments, but rather he will bow his knees, and knock his breaſt,

breast, for it is not now with him as it was heretofore, when thy candle shined upon his head, and he was protected under the shadow of thy wings, from the temptations which violently assaulted him!

3. O righteous Father, and ever to be praised, the hour is come, that thy servant is to be tryed! behold dear Father, meet it is that in this hour thy servant suffer something for thy sake. O Father, evermore to be honoured, the hour is come, which from all eternity thou didst foreknow should come; that for a short time thy servant should outwardly be oppressed, but inwardly live for ever with thee: that he should be a little despised, humbled, and made as an abject in the sight of men, and much afflicted with passions and infirmities; that he may rise again with thee in the morning of the new light, and be glorified in heaven. Holy Father, thou hast so appointed it and wilt have it so: and this is fullfilled which thy self hast commanded.

4. It is a favour to thy friend that he may suffer, and be afflicted in the world for love of thee, how often soever, and by whomsoever, thou permittest it to fall upon him. For in the world nothing cometh to pass, without thy counsel, without thy providence, or without a cause why. It is good for me, Lord, that thou hast afflicted me, that I may learn thy

thy righteous judgements, and cast away all haughtineſs of heart, and preſumption. It is profitable to me, that ſhame hath covered my face, that I may rather ſeek to thee for comfort than to men. I have learned alſo hereby to dread thy unſearchable judgements, who afflicteſt the juſt with the wicked, but not without equity and juſtice.

5. I give thee thanks, for that thou haſt not ſpared my ſins; but haſt worn me away with bitter ſtripes, inflicting ſorrows, and ſending griefs within and without. There is none under heaven that can comfort me, but thou my Lord God, the heavenly Phyſician of ſouls, that ſtrikeſt and healeſt, bringeſt down to hell and bringeſt back again: let thy correction be upon me, and let thy rod inſtruct me.

6. Behold dear Father, I am in thy hands, I bow my ſelf under the rod of thy correction: ſtrike my back and my neck too, that my crookedneſs may be conformed to thy will. Make me an holy and humble diſciple of thine, (as thou art wont well to do) that I may be ready at every beck of thy divine pleaſure. I commend my ſelf and all mine unto thee to be corrected. It is better to be corrected here, than hereafter. Thou knoweſt all and every thing, and there is nothing in the conſcience of man which can be hidden from thee. Before

things are done, thou knoweſt that the
will come to paſs, and haſt no need tha
any ſhould teach thee, or admoniſh the
of thoſe things which are done on earth
Thou knoweſt what is expedient for my
profiting, and how much tribulation i
fit to ſcoure off the ruſt of my ſins. D
with me according to thy deſired good
pleaſure, and diſdain me not for my ſin
full life, better and more clearly know
to none than to thee alone.

7. Grant me, O Lord, to know tha
which is to be known, to love that whic
is to be loved, to praiſe that which ple
ſeth thee moſt, to eſteem that which
precious unto thee, to deſpiſe that whi
is contemptible in thy ſight: ſuffer m
not to judge according to the ſight of t
outward eyes, nor to give ſentence a
cording to the hearing of the ears of i
norant men; but to diſcern of viſible a
ſpiritual things with a true judgeme
and above all things ever to ſearch af
thy good will and pleaſure.

8. The minds of men are often d
ceived in their judging; the lovers
the world are alſo deceived in lovi
only viſible things. What is a man t
better, for that he is eſteemed great
man? The deceitful in exalting the d
ceitful, the vain man in extolling t
vain, the blind in commending t
blind, the weak in magnifying the we
deceiveth him and doth verily m
ſha

ſhame him, while he doth vainly praiſe him. For how much every one is in thy ſight, ſo much he is, and no more.

CHAP. LI.

That a man ought to imploy himſelf in works of humility, when ſtrength is wanting for higher imployments.

Chriſt. Son, thou art not able always to continue in the more fervent deſire of vertue, nor to perſiſt in the higher pitch of contemplation; but thou muſt ſometimes of neceſſity by reaſon of original corruption deſcend to inferiour things, and bear the burden of this corruptible life though againſt thy will, and with grief. As long as thou carrieſt a mortal body, thou ſhalt feel trouble and heavineſs of heart. Thou oughteſt therefore in the fleſh oftentimes to bewail the burden of the fleſh: for that thou canſt not always continue in ſpiritual exerciſes and divine contemplations.

2. It is then expedient for thee to flie to humble and exteriour works, and to refreſh thy ſelf with good affections; to expect with a firm confidence my coming and heavenly viſitation, to bear patiently thy baniſhment and the dryneſs of thy mind, till I viſit thee again, and deliver thee from all anxieties. For I will make thee forget thy former pains,

and enjoy inward quietneſs. I will lay open before thee the pleaſant fields of holy Scripture, that with an enlarged heart thou maiſt begin to run the way of my commandments. And thou ſhalt ſay, *That the ſufferings of this preſent time are not worthy of the glory to come, that ſhall be revealed in us.*

CHAP. LII.

That a man ought to eſteem himſelf not worthy of comfort, but rather to deſerve ſtripes.

Chriſtian. Lord, I am not worthy of thy comfort, nor of any ſpiritual viſitation; and therefore thou dealeſt juſtly with me, when thou leaveſt me poor and deſolate. For though I could ſhed a ſea of tears, yet I were not worthy of thy comfort. For (alas) I deſerve nothing but to be ſcourged and puniſhed, in that I have grievouſly and often offended thee, and have ſinned greatly in many things. All things therefore duly conſidered, I am not worthy even of the leaſt comfort. But thou O gracious and merciſull God, who wilt not that thy work ſhould periſh, to ſhew the riches of thy goodneſs upon the veſſels of mercy, even beyond his deſert vouchſafeſt to comfort thy ſervant above the manner of men. For thy comforts are not like to the words of men.

2. Wh

2. What have I done, O Lord, that thou ſhouldeſt beſtow any heavenly comfort upon me? I remember not that I have done any good, but have been always prone to ſin, and ſlow to amendment. This is true, and I cannot deny it. If I ſhould ſay otherwiſe, thou wouldeſt ſtand againſt me, and there would be none to defend me. What have I deſerved for my ſins, but hell and everlaſting fire? I confeſs in very truth that I am worthy of all ſcorn and contempt, and it is not fit that I ſhould be remembred amongſt thy holy ones. And although I be unwilling to hear this, yet notwithſtanding for the truths ſake I will lay open my ſins againſt my ſelf, that ſo the ſooner I may obtain mercy at thy hand.

3. What ſhall I ſay being guilty and full of all confuſion? I have nothing to ſay but this, I have ſinned, Lord, I have ſinned; have mercy on me, pardon me; ſuffer me a little, that I may bewail my grief, before I go unto the land of darkneſs, a land covered with the ſhadow of death: What doſt thou ſo much require of a guilty and miſerable ſinner, as that he be contrite, and humble himſelf for his offences? of true contrition and humbling of the heart, ariſeth hope of forgiveneſs; the troubled conſcience is reconciled *to God*, the favour of God which was loſt, is recovered; man is preſerved

served from the wrath to come, and God and the penitent soul meet together with an holy kiss.

4. Humble contrition for sins is an acceptable sacrifice unto thee, O Lord, savouring much sweeter in thy presence than the perfume of frankincense. This is also the pleasant ointment, which thou wouldst should be poured upon thy sacred feet: for thou never despisest a contrite and humbled heart. There is the place of refuge, from the angry face of the enemy; there is amended and washed away, whatsoever defilement elsewhere was contracted, and whatsoever is polluted.

CHAP. LIII.

That the grace of God doth not joyn it self with those that savour of earthly things.

Christ. Son, my grace is precious, it suffereth not it self to be mingled with external things, nor earthly comforts. Thou oughtest therefore to cast away all hindrances of grace, if thou desire to receive the infusion thereof. Choose therefore a secret place to thy self, love to live alone with thy self, desire the conversation of none; but rather pour out devout prayers unto God, that thou mayst keep thy mind in compunction, and thy conscience pure. Esteem the

the whole world as nothing; prefer attendance upon God before all outward things: for thou canſt not attend upon me, and be delighted alſo in tranſitory vanities. Thou oughteſt to ſequeſter thy ſelf from thy acquaintance and friends, and to keep thy mind void of all temporal comfort. So the bleſſed Apoſtle Peter required, that the faithful of Chriſt ſhould keep themſelves as ſtrangers and pilgrims in this world.

2. O how great a confidence ſhall he have at the hour of death, whom no affection to any earthly thing detaineth in the world! But the ſickly mind is not yet capable of ſo retired a heart; neither doth the carnal man underſtand the liberty of him who is inwardly recollected. Notwithſtanding if he will be truly ſpiritual, he ought to renounce as well thoſe which are ſtrangers, as thoſe which are near unto him; and to beware of no man more than of himſelf. If thou perfectly overcome thy ſelf, thou ſhalt with more eaſe ſubdue the reſt. It is a perfect victory to triumph over our ſelves. For he that keepeth himſelf ſubject in ſuch ſort, that his ſenſuality be ſubdued to reaſon, and reaſon in all things be obedient to me; he is truly a conquerour of himſelf, and Lord of the world.

3. If thou deſire to mount unto this height, thou muſt ſet out couragiouſly, and lay the ax to the root; that thou

maist pluck up and destroy that hidden inordinate inclination to thy self, and unto all private and earthly good. Of this sin (that man too inordinately loveth himself) almost all dependeth, whatsoever is throughly to be overcome: which evil being once overcome and subdued, there will presently ensue great peace and tranquility. But for that few endeavour perfectly to die unto themselves, and altogether to go out of themselves, therefore they remain intangled in themselves, and cannot be lifted up in spirit above themselves. But he that desireth to walk freely with me, it is necessary that he mortifie all evil and inordinate affections, and that he should not earnestly adhere unto any creature by private love.

CHAP. LIV.

Of the different motions of Nature and Grace.

Christ. Son, mark diligently the motions of *Nature* and *Grace*; for in a very contrary and subtil manner these are moved, and can hardly be discerned but by him that is spiritually and inwardly enlightned. All men indeed desire that which is good, and pretend some good in their words and deeds; and therefore under the shew of good, many are deceived. *Nature* is crafty, and seduceth,

ſeduceth, intangleth, and deceiveth many, and always propoſeth her ſelf for her end; but *Grace* walketh in ſimplicity, and avoideth all ſhew of evil, pretendeth not deceits, and doth all things purely for Gods ſake, in whom alſo ſhe finally reſteth.

2. Nature will not willingly die, nor be kept down, nor be overcome, nor be ſubject to any, nor be ſubdued: but *Grace* mindeth ſelf mortification, reſiſteth ſenſuality, ſeeketh to be ſubject, is willing to be kept under, and will not uſe her own liberty: ſhe loveth to be kept under diſcipline, and deſireth not to rule any, but always to live and remain wholly ſubject unto God, and for God is ready humbly to bow unto all men. *Nature* ſtriveth for her own commodity; and conſidereth what profit ſhe may reap by another; but *Grace* conſidereth not what is profitable and commodious unto her ſelf, but rather what is profitable to many. *Nature* willingly receiveth honour and reverence: but *Grace* faithfully attributeth all honour and glory unto God.

3. *Nature* feareth ſhame and contempt; but *Grace* rejoyceth to ſuffer reproach for the name of Jeſus. *Nature* loveth idleneſs and bodily reſt; but *Grace* cannot be idle, but willingly embraceth labour. *Nature* ſeeketh to have thoſe things that be curious and glorious, abhorreth that which is mean and

course; but *Grace* delighteth in plain and humble things, despiseth not rough things, nor refuseth to wear that which is old and torn. *Nature* respecteth temporal things, rejoyceth at earthly gain, sorroweth for loss, is moved with every little injurious word; but *Grace* thinketh on that which is everlasting and cleaveth not to temporal things, she is not troubled with losses, nor disquieted with hard words; for that she hath placed her treasure and joy in heaven, where nothing perisheth.

4. *Nature* is covetous, and doth more willingly receive than give, she loveth proper and private things; but *Grace* is bountiful and liberal to all; shunneth private interest, is content with a little, thinketh that it is more blessed to give than to receive. *Nature* is bent to the creatures, to her own flesh, to vanities, and to many vagaries: but *Grace* draweth unto God and unto goodness, renounceth creatures, flyeth the world, hateth the desires of the flesh, restraineth wandrings abroad, blusheth to be seen in publick; *Nature* is willing to have some outward comfort, wherein she may be sensibly delighted: but *Grace* seeketh comfort in God alone, and delighteth above all visible things in the highest good.

5. *Nature* worketh all for her own gain and profit, she can do nothing freely,

ly, but for beſtowed benefits ſhe hopeth to obtain either that which is equal, or better, either praiſe or favour, and coveteth to have her works and gifts much eſteemed: but *Grace* ſeeketh no temporal thing, nor deſireth any other reward than God alone; nor asketh more of temporal neceſſaries, than what may ſerve her for the obtaining of things eternal.

6. *Nature* rejoyceth to have many friends and kinsfolks, ſhe glorieth of noble place and birth; pleaſeth the powerful, fawneth upon the rich, applaudeth thoſe that are like her ſelf: but *Grace* loveth even her enemies, and is not puffed up with multitude of friends; nor eſteemeth place or birth, but where it is joyned with greater virtue; ſhe rather favoureth the poor than the rich; hath more compaſſion of the innocent than the powerful; rejoyceth in the true, not in the deceitful; always exhorteth good men to labour for the better gifts; and by goodneſs to reſemble the Son of God. *Nature* quickly complaineth of want and trouble: *Grace* conſtantly endureth need.

7. *Nature* referreth all things to her ſelf, ſtriveth and contendeth for her ſelf: but *Grace* reduceth all to God, from whence originally they proceed: ſhe aſcribeth no good to her ſelf, neither doth ſhe arrogantly preſume: ſhe contendeth

tendeth not, nor preferreth her opinion before others; but in every apprehension and opinion submitteth her self unto the eternal wisdom and to the divine judgement. *Nature* coveteth to know secrets, and to hear news; she will appear abroad, and make proof of many things by her own senses; she desireth to be known, and to do those things, for which she may be praised and admired; but *Grace* careth not for hearing news, nor to understand curious matters; for that all this springeth from the old corruption of man, seeing here is nothing new and durable upon earth. She teacheth therefore to restrain the senses, to avoid vain pleasing and ostentation, humbly to hide those things that are worthy of praise and admiration; and of every thing and every knowledge to seek profitable fruit, and the praise and honour of God: she will not have her self nor hers publickly praised, but desireth that God should be blessed in his gifts, who of mere love bestoweth all things.

8. This *Grace* is a supernatural light, and a certain special gift of God, and the proper mark of the elect, and pledge of everlasting salvation; which raiseth up a man from earthly things to love the things of heaven, and of a carnal maketh him a spiritual man. How much the more therefore *Nature* is depressed and subdued, so much the greater

Grace

Grace is infused, and the inward man daily by new visitations more reformed according to the image of God.

CHAP. LV.

Of the corruption of Nature, and efficacy of divine Grace.

Christian. O Lord my God, who hast created me after thy Image and likeness, grant me this grace which thou hast shewed to be so great and so necessary to salvation, that I may overcome my wicked nature, which draweth me to sin and to perdition. For I feel in my flesh the law of sin, contradicting the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the obeying of sensuality in many things: neither can I resist the passions thereof, unless thy most holy grace fervently infused into my heart, do assist me.

2. Thy grace, O Lord, and great grace is needful, that nature may be overcome; which is ever prone to evil from her youth. For by *Adam* the first man, nature being fallen and corrupted by sin, the penalty of this stain hath descended upon all mankind, in such sort, that nature it self which by thee was created good and upright, is now accounted for the sin and for the infirmity of corrupted nature; for that the motion thereof left unto it self draweth to evil and to inferiour

ferioure things. For the little power which remaineth, is like a certain ſpark lying hidden in aſhes. This is natural reaſon it ſelf, encompaſſed about with great darkneſs, yet ſtill retaining power to diſcern good and evil, and the difference between true and falſe; although it be unable to fulfill all that it approveth; and enjoyeth not now the full light of truth, nor the ſoundneſs of her affections.

3. Hence it is, my God, that after the inward man I delight in thy law, knowing thy commandments to be good, juſt, and holy, reproving alſo all evil and ſin, teaching that it is to be avoided. But with the fleſh I ſerve the law of ſin, whilſt I rather obey ſenſuality than reaſon. Hence it is that to will to do good is preſent with me, but how to perform it I find not. For this cauſe I often purpoſe many good things, but becauſe I want grace to help my weakneſs, upon a light reſiſtance I go back and faint. Hence it is that I know the way of perfection, and ſee clearly enough what I ought to do; but preſſed down with the weight of mine own corruption, I riſe not unto what is more perfect.

4. O Lord, how exceeding needful is thy grace for me, to begin any good work, to go forward, and to accompliſh it? For without it I can do nothing, but in thee I can do all things, when thy grace doth ſtrengthen me. O heavenly

grace

grace indeed, without which our moſt worthy actions are nothing, and no gifts of nature are to be eſteemed. Arts, riches, beauty or ſtrength, wit or eloquence, are of no value with thee, O Lord, without thy grace. For gifts of nature are common to good and bad, but the peculiar gift of the elect is grace and love; and they that bear this honourable mark, are eſteemed worthy of everlaſting life. This grace is ſo eminent, that neither the gift of propheſie, nor any ſpeculation (how high ſoever) is of any eſteem without it. Neither faith nor hope, nor other virtues are acceptable unto thee without love and grace.

5. O moſt bleſſed Grace, that makeſt the poor in ſpirit rich in virtues, and makeſt the rich in many bleſſings to be humble in heart; come, come down unto me, repleniſh me early with thy comfort, leſt my ſoul ſhould faint for wearineſs and dryneſs of mind. I beſeech thee, O Lord, that I may find grace in thy ſight; for thy grace is ſufficient for me, though other things that nature deſireth be wanting. If I be tempted and vexed with many tribulations, I will not fear any evils, whilſt thy grace is with me: that is my ſtrength; that giveth advice and help; that is ſtronger than all enemies, and wiſer than all the wiſe.

6. Thy grace is the miſtreſs of truth, the

the teacher of discipline, the light of the heart, the solace in affliction, the driver away of sorrow, the expeller of fear, the nurse of devotion, the mother of tears. What am I without it, but a withered piece of wood, and an unprofitable stalk only meet to be cast away? Let thy grace therefore, O Lord, always prevent me and follow me, and make me ever diligent in good works, through Jesus Christ thy Son. *Amen.*

CHAP. LVI.

That we ought to deny our selves, and imitate Christ by the Cross.

Christ. Son, look how much thou goest out of thy self, so much maist thou enter into me. As to be void of all desire of external things, maketh inward peace; so the forsaking of our selves inwardly, joyneth unto God. I will have thee learn the perfect leaving of thy self to my will, without contradiction and complaint. Follow me, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Without the way there is no going aright, without truth there is no knowledge, without life there is no living. I am the way which thou oughtest to follow; the truth which thou oughtest to trust; the life for which thou oughtest to hope. I am the way inviolable, the truth infallible, the life which cannot end. I am the most straight

ſtraight way, the ſupreme truth, the true life, yea the bleſſed life, the uncreated life. If thou remain in my way thou ſhalt keep the truth, and the truth ſhall make thee free, and thou ſhalt lay hold on everlaſting life.

2. If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments: if thou wilt know the truth, believe me. If thou wilt be perfect, ſell all. If thou wilt be my Diſciple, deny thy ſelf. If thou wilt poſſeſs a bleſſed life, deſpiſe this preſent life. If thou wilt be exalted in heaven, humble thy ſelf upon earth. If thou wilt reign with me, bear the croſs with me. For only the ſervants of the croſs find the way of bliſs and true light.

3. *Chriſtian.* Lord Jeſus, foraſmuch as thy way is narrow and contemptible unto the world, grant me grace to imitate thee in ſuffering wordly contempt. For the ſervant is not greater than his Lord, nor the Diſciple above his Maſter. Let thy ſervant be exerciſed in thy holy life, for therein my ſalvation and the true holineſs doth conſiſt: whatſoever I read or hear beſides it, doth not recreate or delight me fully.

4. *Chriſt.* Son, now that thou knoweſt and haſt read theſe things, happy ſhalt thou be, if thou do them. He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and I will love him, and will manifeſt my ſelf unto him,

him, and will make him sit with me in the Kingdom of my Father.

Christian. Lord Jesus, as thou hast said and promised, so let it come to pass, and grant that I may not wholly undeserve this favour. I have received the cross, I have received it from thy hand; I will bear it, and bear it till death, as thou hast laid it upon me. Truly the life of a good retired person is the cross, but yet it is a guide to Paradise. It is now begun, it is not lawful to go back, neither is it fit to leave that which I have undertaken.

5. Let us then take courage, my Brethren, and go forwards together, Jesus will be with us. For Jesus's sake we have undertaken this Cross, for Jesus's sake let us persevere in the Cross. He will be our helper, who is our guide and fore-runner. Behold our King goeth before us, who also will fight for us: let us follow him manfully, let none be dismayed; but be we ready to die valiantly in the battel, and let us not blemish our glory by flying from the Cross.

CHAP. LVII.

That a man be not too much dejected, when he falleth into some defects.

Christ. Son, patience and humility in adversities are more pleasing to me than much comfort and devotion in pro-

proſperities. Why art thou grieved for every little trifle ſpoken and done againſt thee? Although it had been much more thou oughteſt not to have been moved. But now let it paſs; it is not the firſt that hath happened, nor is it any new thing, neither ſhall it be the laſt, if thou live long. Thou art manly enough, as long as no adverſity happeneth. Thou canſt give good counſel alſo, and canſt ſtrengthen others with thy words: but when any tribulation ſuddenly comes to thy door, thou art deſtitute of counſel and ſtrength. See therefore thy great frailty which thou often haſt experience of in every ſmall occurrence. It is notwithſtanding intended for thy good, when theſe and ſuch like things befall thee.

2. Put it out of thy heart the beſt thou canſt, and if it touch thee, yet let it not deject thee, nor trouble thee long; bear it at leaſt patiently, if thou canſt not joyfully. Although thou be unwilling to hear it, and conceiveſt indignation thereat, yet reſtrain thy ſelf, and ſuffer no inordinate word to paſs out of thy mouth, whereby the little ones may be offended. The ſtorm which now is raiſed ſhall quickly be appeaſed, and inward grief ſhall be ſweetned by the return of grace. I yet live, ſaith the Lord, and am ready to help thee, and to give thee greater comfort than before, if thou put

put thy truſt in me and calleſt devoutly upon me.

3. Be more patient, and prepare thy ſelf to greater ſuffering. All is not loſt, if thou feel thy ſelf often afflicted or grievouſly tempted. Thou art a man, and not God: thou art fleſh, not an Angel. How canſt thou look to continue ever in the ſame ſtate of virtue, when an Angel in heaven hath fallen, as alſo the firſt man in Paradiſe? I am he who will ſtrengthen with health them that mourn, and do raiſe up unto divine glory thoſe that know their own infirmity.

4. *Chriſtian.* Lord, bleſſed be thy word, more ſweet unto my mouth than the hony and the hony-comb. What ſhould I do in theſe my ſo great tribulations and ſtraits, unleſs thou didſt comfort me with thy holy words? What matter is it, how much, and what I ſuffer, ſo as I may at length attain to the port of ſalvation? Grant me a good end, grant me a happy paſſage out of this world. Be mindful of me, O my God, and direct me the right way to thy Kingdom. *Amen.*

CHAP. LVIII.

Of not ſearching into high matters and into the ſecret judgements of God.

Chriſt. Son, beware thou diſpute not of high matters, nor of the ſecret judgements of God, why this man is left, and that man taken into ſo great favour: why

why also this man is so much afflicted, and that man so greatly advanced, these things are beyond the reach of man, neither can any reason or disputation search out the judgement of God. When the enemy therefore suggesteth these things unto thee, or some curious people enquire of thee, answer that of the Prophet, *Thou art just, O Lord, and thy judgement is right.* And again, *The judgements of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether.* My judgements are to be feared, not to be discussed; for they are such as cannot be comprehended by the understanding of man.

2. In like manner I advise thee not to enquire, nor dispute of the merits of the Saints, which of them is holier than the other, and which is greater in the Kingdom of heaven. These things oftentimes bred strife and unprofitable contentions, they nourish also pride and vain glory; from whence do spring envy and dissentions, whilst one will proudly prefer this, and the other, another. To desire to know and search out such things, is to no purpose; nor would it please the Saints; for I am not the God of dissention, but of peace: which peace consisteth rather in true humility, than in self exaltation.

3. Some are carried with zeal of affection, to love these or those most: but this love is rather humane than divine.

I am

I am He who made all the Saints, and have given them grace: I have given them glory, I know what every one hath deserved; I have prevented them with the blessings of my goodness. I foreknew my beloved before the beginning of the world. I chose them out of the world, they chose not me first, I called them by grace, I drew them by mercy, I led them through sundry temptations. I have poured into them glorious comforts, I have given them perseverance, I have crowned their patience.

4. I know both the first and the last: I embrace all with inestimable love. I am to be praised in all my Saints: I am to be blessed above all things, and to be honoured in every one, whom I have thus gloriously exalted and predestinated without any precedent merits of their own. He therefore that contemneth one of the least of my Saints, honoureth not the greatest; for that I made both the less and the greater: and he that dispraiseth any of my Saints, dispraiseth also me, and all the rest in the Kingdom of heaven. There all are one through the bond of Love, they think the same, they will the same, and they all love one another.

5. But yet (which is much more high) they love me more than themselves, and are drawn out of all themselves or any merits of their own. For being ravished above

above ſelf love, they are wholly carried out to love me, in whom alſo they do fruitively reſt. Nothing can turn them back, nothing can preſs them down; for being full of the eternal Truth, they burn with the fire of unquenchable love. Let therefore carnal and natural men who can affect no other but their private ioys, forbear to diſpute of the ſtate of Saints. They add and take away according to their own fancies, not as it pleaſeth the eternal Truth.

6. Many are ignorant, but ſpecially thoſe that be ſlenderly enlightned; and theſe can ſeldom love any with a perfect ſpiritual love. They are as yet much drawn by a natural affection and humane friendſhip to this man or to that; and according to the experience they have of themſelves in their earthly affections, ſo they frame an imagination of heavenly things. But there is an incomparable diſtance between the things which the imperfect ones imagine in their conceits, and thoſe which the illuminated ones do ſee by revelation from above.

7. Beware therefore, my Son, that thou treat not curiouſly of theſe things, which exceed thy knowledge: but rather ſo apply thy endeavours, that thou mayſt at leaſt have the meaneſt place in the Kingdom of heaven. And if any one did know which of the Saints exceed others in ſanctity, or were greater in the

Kingdom

Kingdom of heaven; what would this knowledge avail him, unleſs he ſhould thereby humble himſelf the more in my ſight, and ſhould riſe up into the greater praiſing of my name: He pleaſeth God much better that thinketh of the greatneſs of his ſins, and the ſmallneſs of his graces, and how far off he is from the perfection of the Saints; than he that diſputeth of their greatneſs or littleneſs.

8. They are well and right well contented, if men could content themſelves, and refrain from theſe vain diſcourſes. They glory not of their own merits, for they aſcribe no good unto themſelves, but attribute all to me, who of my infinite love have given them all things. They are filled with ſo great love of the Divinity, and with ſuch an overflowing joy, that there is no glory nor happineſs, that is or can be wanting unto them. All the Saints, how much the higher they be in glory, ſo much the more humble they are in themſelves, and nearer and dearer unto me: And therefore it is written, That they did caſt their Crowns before God, and fell down upon their face before the Lamb, and adored him that liveth for ever and ever.

9. Many inquire who is greateſt in the kingdom of God, that know not whether they ſhal ever be numbred there

amongſt

amongst the least. It is a great thing to be even the least in heaven, where all are great: for that all there shall be called, and shall be indeed, the Sons of God. *The least shall become a thousand, and the sinner of an hundred years shall die.* For when the Disciples asked who should be greatest in the Kingdom of heaven, they received this answer, Unless you be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of heaven: Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the Kingdom of heaven.

10. Wo be unto them that disdain to humble themselves willingly with little children. For the low gate of the Kingdom of heaven will not give them entrance. And wo be to the rich, that have their comforts here: for whilest the poor enter into the Kingdom of God, they shall stand lamenting without. Rejoyce you that be humble, and you that be poor be you glad, for yours is the Kingdom of God, if you walk according to the truth.

CHAP. LIX.

That all our hope and trust is to be fixed in God alone.

Christian. Lord, what trust have I in this life? Or what is the greatest

comfort, that all things under heav
do yield me? Is it not thou, my Lo
God, whose mercies are without num
ber? Where hath it been well with m
without thee? Or when could it be
with me, when thou wert present? I h
rather be poor for thee, than rich wit
out thee. I rather choose to be a pilgri
on earth with thee, than to possess heave
without thee. Where thou art, there
heaven: and there is death and hell
where thou art not. Thou art my desir
and therefore it behoveth me to sigh an
cry and pray unto thee. For I have non
fully to trust in, none that can seasona
bly help me in my necessities, but the
alone, my God. Thou art my hope, tho
art my trust; thou art my comforter, an
most faithful unto me in all things.

2. All men seek their own gain; tho
only seekest my salvation and my profi
and turnest all things to my good. Al
though thou exposest me to divers tem
ptations and adversities, yet thou order
est all this to my advantage, who art wo
to try thy beloved ones a thousand way
In which trial thou oughtest no less to
loved and praised, then if thou didst fil
me with heavenly comforts.

3. In thee therefore, O Lord God, I
put my whole hope and refuge: in the
I place my tribulation and anguish; fo
I find all to be weak and uncons
whatsoever I behold out of thee. For
th

ther can many friends avail, nor ſtrong helpers aid, nor wiſe counſellors give any profitable anſwer, nor the Books of the learned comfort, nor any wealth deliver, nor any ſecret or pleaſant place defend: if thou thy ſelf doſt not aſſiſt, help, ſtrengthen, comfort, inſtruct, and keep us.

4. For all things that ſeem to belong to the attainment of peace and felicity, without thee are nothing, and do bring indeed no felicity at all. Thou therefore art the end of all that is good, the height of life, the depth of wiſdom: and the ſtrongeſt comfort of thy ſervants is to truſt in thee above all things. To thee therefore do I lift up mine eyes, in thee O my God, the Father of mercies, I put my truſt. Bleſs and ſanctifie my ſoul with thy heavenly bleſſings, that it may be made thy holy habitation, and the ſeat of thy eternal glory: And that nothing may be found in the Temple of thy glory, that may offend the eyes of thy Majeſty. According to the greatneſs of thy goodneſs, and multitude of thy mercies look upon me, and hear the prayer of thy poor ſervant, who is far exiled from thee in the land of the ſhadow of death. Protect and keep the ſoul of thy ſervant, amidſt ſo many dangers of this corruptible life, and by thy grace accompanying me direct it by the way of peace, to the country of everlaſting light. Amen.

THE FOURTH BOOK.

A devout Exhortation unto the holy Communion.

The voice of Christ.

COme unto me, all ye that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you, saith the Lord. The bread which I will give, is my flesh, for the life of the world. Take ye and eat, this is my body that is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. The words which I have spoken unto you, are spirit and life.

CHAP. I.

With how great reverence Christ ought to be received.

The voice of the Disciple.

THese are thy words, O Christ the everlasting Truth, though not spoken all at one time, nor written in one and the self-same place. Because therefore they are thine and true, they are all thankfully and faithfully to be received by me. They are thine, and thou

thou haſt ſpoken them; and they are mine alſo, becauſe thou haſt ſpoken them for my ſalvation. I willingly receive them from thy mouth, that they may be the deeper imprinted in my heart. Theſe ſo gracious words, ſo full of ſweetneſs and love, do encourage me, but mine own offences do diſhearten me, and my impure conſcience driveth me back from the receiving of ſo great myſteries. The ſweetneſs of thy words doth encourage me, but the multitude of my ſins doth oppreſs me.

2. Thou commandeſt me to come confidently unto thee, if I will have part with thee; and to receive the food of immortality, if I deſire to obtain everlaſting life and glory. Come, ſaidſt thou, unto me, all ye that labour and are burdened, and I will refreſh you. O ſweet and loving word in the ear of a ſinner, that thou, my Lord God, ſhouldeſt invite the poor and needy to the participation of thy moſt holy body! But who am I, Lord, that I may preſume to approach unto thee? behold the heavens cannot contain thee, and thou ſaidſt, Come ye all unto me.

3. What meaneth this ſo gracious a condeſcenſion, and this ſo loving invitation? How ſhall I dare to come, that know not any good in my ſelf, whereupon I may preſume? How ſhall I bring thee unto my houſe, that have ſo often

offended thy most gracious countenance? The Angels and the Archangels honour thee, the Saints and just men do fear thee, and saidst thou, Come ye all unto me? Unless thou, O Lord, didst say it, who would believe it to be true? And unless thou didst command it, who would attempt to come unto thee? Behold Noah a just man laboured a hundred years in the making of the Ark, that he might be saved with a few; and how can I in one hours space prepare my self to receive with reverence the Maker of the world?

4. Moses thy great servant, and thy especial friend, made an Ark of incorruptible wood, which also he covered with most pure Gold, to put the Tables of the Law therein: and I a corruptible creature, how shall I dare so lightly to receive the Maker of the Law, and the giver of life? Solomon the wisest of the Kings of Israel bestowed seven years in building a magnificent Temple to the praise of thy name, and celebrated the feast of the Dedication thereof eight days together: he offered a thousand peace-offerings, and he solemnly set the Ark in the place prepared for it, with the sound of trumpets, and joy; and I the most miserable and poorest of men, how shall I bring thee into my house, that can scarce spend one half hour religiously? and I wish I could once spend about one

one half hour in a worthy and due manner!

5. O my God, how much did they endeavour to pleaſe thee, and alas how little is that which I do! How little time do I ſpend to prepare my ſelf to receive! I am ſeldom wholly recollected, very ſeldom free from all diſtraction; and yet ſurely no unbecoming thought ought to appear in the comfortable preſence of thy Deity, nor any creature wholly take me up: for I am not to harbour an Angel, but the Lord of Angels.

6. And yet there is great difference between the Ark of the Covenant with its reliques, and thy moſt pure body with its unſpeakable virtues: between thoſe legal ſacrifices, figures of future things, and the true Sacrifice of thy body, the complement of all antient Sacrifices. Why therefore am I not more zealous in thy venerable preſence? Wherefore do I not prepare my ſelf with greater care to receive thy holy things; ſith thoſe holy ancient Patriarchs and Prophets, yea Kings alſo and Princes, with the whole people, have ſhewed ſuch an affectionateneſs of devotion to thy divine ſervice?

7. The moſt devout King David danced before the Ark of God with all his might, calling to mind the benefits beſtowed in times paſt upon his Fore-

thers. ...ade instruments of sundry ...nds, he published Psalms, and appointed them to be sung with joy: he also oftentimes sung to the harp, being inspired with the grace of the Holy Ghost. He taught the people of Israel to praise God with their whole heart, and with pleasant voices every day to bless and praise him. If so great devotion was then used, and such celebrating of divine praise before the Ark of the Testament; what reverence and devotion is now to be performed by me and all Christian people at the Sacrament, in receiving the most precious body of Christ?

9. O God the invisible Creator of the world, how wonderfully dost thou deal with us! how sweetly and graciously dost thou dispose of all things with thine elect, to whom thou offerest thy self to be received in the Sacrament! O this exceedeth all understanding! This chiefly draweth the hearts of the religious and inflameth their affections. For thy true faithful servants that dispose their whole life to amendment, by this most precious Sacrament oftentimes gain much of the grace of devotion, and love of holiness.

10. O the admirable and hidden grace of this Sacrament, which only the faithfull ones of Christ do know: but the unbelieving, and such as are slaves unto sin, cannot have experience thereof! In this

Sacra-

Sacrament ſpiritual grace is given, and ſtrength which was loſt is reſtored in the ſoul, and the beauty disfigured by ſin returneth again. This grace is ſometimes ſo great, that out of the fullneſs of devotion which is here given, not only the mind, but the weak body alſo, feeleth great increaſe of ſtrength.

11. Our coldneſs and negligence ſurely is much to be wailed and pitied, that we are not drawn with greater affection to receive Chriſt, in whom all the hope and merit of thoſe that are to be ſaved doth conſiſt. For he is our ſanctification and redemption: he is the comfort of thoſe who are here but travellers, and the everlaſting fruition of Saints. It is much therefore to be lamented that many do ſo little conſider this comfortable myſtery, which rejoyceth heaven, and preſerveth the whole world. O the blindneſs and hardneſs of mans heart, that doth not more deeply weigh ſo unſpeakable a gift; but rather cometh by the daily uſe thereof to regard it little or nothing!

12. For if this moſt holy Sacrament ſhould be celebrated in one place only, and conſecrated by one only Miniſter in the world; with how great deſires doſt thou think would men be affected to that place, and to ſuch a Miniſter, that they might enjoy the celebration of theſe divine myſteries? But now there are many

sters; and Christ is offered in many places; that so the grace and love of God to man may appear so much the greater, how much the more this sacred Communion is spread through the world. Thanks be unto thee good Jesus, the everlasting Shepherd that hast vouchsafed to refresh us who are poor and in a state of banishment, with thy precious body and blood, and to invite us to the receiving of these mysteries with the words of thy own mouth, saying, Come unto me all ye that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you.

CHAP. II.

That the great goodness and love of God is exhibited to man in this Sacrament.

The voice of the Disciple.

IN confidence of thy goodness and great mercy, O Lord, being sick, I approach unto my Saviour, being hungry and thirsty to the fountain of life, needy to the King of heaven, a servant unto my Lord, a creature to my Creator, being disconsolate I come to thee my merciful comforter. But whence is this to me, that thou vouchsafest to come unto me? Who am I that thou shouldest give thy self unto me? How dare a sinner appear before thee? And

And how is it that thou doſt vouchſafe to come unto a ſinner? Thou knoweſt thy ſervant, and ſeeſt that he hath no good thing in him, for which thou ſhouldeſt beſtow this favour upon him. I confeſs therefore my unworthineſs, and I acknowledge thy goodneſs; I praiſe thy mercy, and give thee thanks for this thy tranſcendent love. For thou doſt this for thine own ſake, not for any merits of mine; to the end that thy goodneſs may be better known unto me, thy love more abundantly ſhewed, and thy gracious condeſcenſion may be the more eminently ſet forth. Since therefore it is thy pleaſure, and thou haſt commanded that it ſhould be ſo, this thy favour is alſo dearly pleaſing to me, and I wiſh that my ſins may be no hindrance herein.

2. O moſt ſweet and benign Jeſus, how great reverence and thanks together with perpetual praiſe, is due unto thee for the receiving of thy ſacred body, whoſe preciouſneſs no man is able to expreſs! But what ſhall I think of at this Communion, now that I am to approach unto my Lord, whom I am not able duly to honour, and yet I deſire to receive him with devotion? What can I think better and more profitable, than to humble my ſelf wholly before thee, and to exalt thy infinite goodneſs above me? I praiſe thee my God, and will exalt thee for ever; and I do deſpiſe and ſubmit my

ſelf

ſelf unto thee, in a deep ſenſe of my own unworthineſs.

3. Behold thou art the Holy of Holies, and I the skum of ſinners! Behold thou inclineſt unto me, who am not worthy ſo much as to look up unto thee! Behold thou comeſt unto me! it is thy will to be with me, thou inviteſt me to thy banquet. Thou wilt give me the food of heaven, and bread of Angels to eat, which is no other indeed than thy ſelf, the living bread, that deſcendeſt from heaven, and giveſt life unto the world.

4. Behold from whence doth this love proceed! what a gracious condeſcenſion of thine appeareth herein! How great thanks and praiſes are due unto thee for theſe benefits! O how good and profitable was thy counſel, when thou ordaineſt it! How ſweet and pleaſant the banquet, when thou gaveſt thy ſelf to be our food! How wonderful is this thy doing, O Lord, how mighty is thy power, how unſpeakable is thy truth! For thou ſaidſt the word, and all things were made; and this was done which thou commandedſt.

5. A thing of great admiration, that thou, my Lord God, true God and man, ſhouldeſt be exhibited unto us by the elements of bread and wine. Thou who art the Lord of all things, and ſtandeſt in need of none, haſt pleaſed to dwell in us by

by means of this thy Sacrament: preſerve my heart and body unſpotted, that with a chearful and pure conſcience I may often celebrate thy myſteries, and receive them to my everlaſting health; which thou haſt chiefly ordained and inſtituted for thy honour and for a perpetual memorial.

6. Rejoyce, O my ſoul, and give thanks unto God for ſo noble a gift, and ſo ſingular a comfort left unto thee in this vail of tears. For as often as thou calleſt to mind this myſtery, and receiveſt the body of Chriſt; ſo often doſt thou remember the work of thy redemption, and art made partaker of all the merits of Chriſt. For the love of Chriſt is never diminiſhed, and the greatneſs of his propitiation is never exhauſted. Therefore thou oughteſt always to diſpoſe thy ſelf hereunto by a freſh renewing of thy mind, and to weigh with attentive conſideration this great myſtery of thy ſalvation. So great, new, and joyfull it ought to ſeem unto thee, when thou comeſt to theſe holy myſteries; as if the ſame day Chriſt firſt deſcending into the womb of the Virgin, were become man; or hanging on the croſs did ſuffer and die for the ſalvation of mankind.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

That it is profitable to communicate often.

The voice of the Disciple.

BEhold, O Lord, I come unto thee, that I may be comforted in thy gift, and be delighted in thy holy banquet, which thou, O God, hast prepared in thy goodness for the poor. Behold in thee is all whatsoever I can or ought to desire: thou art my salvation and my redemption, my hope and my strength, my honour and my glory. Make joyful therefore this day the soul of thy servant, for that I have lifted it up to thee. O Lord Jesus, I desire to receive thee now with devotion and reverence. I do long to bring thee into my house, that with Zacheus I may obtain to be blessed by thee, and to be numbred amongst the children of Abraham. My soul thirsteth to receive thy body, my heart desireth to be united with thee.

2. Give thy self to me, and it sufficeth: for besides thee no comfort is available. I cannot be without thee, nor live without thy visitation. And therefore I must often come unto thee, and receive thee for the welfare of my soul; lest perhaps I faint in the way, if I be deprived of thy heavenly food. For so, most

moſt merciful Jeſus, thou once didſt ſay, preaching to the people and curing ſundry diſeaſes, *I will not ſend them home faſting leſt they faint in the way.* Deal thou therefore in like manner now with me, who haſt vouchſafed to leave thy ſelf in the Sacrament for the comfort of the faithful. For thou art the ſweet refection of the ſoul; and he that eateth thee worthily, ſhall be partaker and heir of everlaſting glory. It is neceſſary for me, that do ſo often fall and ſin, and ſo quickly wax dull and faint, that by frequent prayer and confeſſion, and receiving of thy holy body, I renew, cleanſe, and inflame my ſelf; leſt perhaps by long abſtaining I ſhould fall from my holy purpoſe.

3. For the imaginations of man are prone unto evil from his youth, and unleſs ſome divine remedy help him, he quickly ſlideth to worſe. This holy Communion therefore draweth back from evil & ſtrengtheneth in good. For if I be now ſo often ſlack and cold when I communicate, or celebrate; what would become of me, if I received not this remedy, and ſought not after ſo great an help? Though every day I be not fit, nor well prepared to communicate; I will endeavour notwithſtanding at due times to receive the divine myſteries, and to be partaker of ſo great a grace. For this is one chief comfort of a faith-

faithful ſoul, whileſt ſhe wandreth from thee in this mortal body, that being often mindful of her God, ſhe receive her beloved with a devout mind.

4. O the wonderful condeſcent of thy mercy toward us, that thou O Lord God, the Creatour and giver of life to all ſpirits, doſt vouchſafe to come unto a poor ſoul, and with thy whole Deity and Humanity to repleniſh her hunger! O happy mind, and bleſſed ſoul, that obtains to receive thee, her Lord God, with devout affection, and in receiving of thee to be filled with ſpiritual joy! O how great a Lord doth ſhe entertain! How beloved a gueſt doth ſhe harbour! how pleaſant a companion doth ſhe receive! how faithful a friend doth ſhe take in! how lovely and noble a ſpouſe doth ſhe embrace! She embraceth him who is to be loved above all that is beloved, and above all things that may be deſired. Let heaven and earth and all their furniture be ſilent in thy preſence: for what praiſe and beauty ſoever they have, it is received from thy bounty, and ſhall not equal the beauty of thy name, whoſe wiſdom is infinite.

CHAP. IV.

That many benefits are beſtowed upon them that communicate devoutly.

The voice of the Diſciple.

MY Lord God, prevent thy ſervant with the bleſſings of thy ſweetneſs,

neſs, that I may approach worthily and devoutly to thy glorious Sacrament: ſtir up my heart unto thee, and deliver me from all dullneſs: viſit me with thy ſalvation, that I may taſte in ſpirit thy ſweetneſs, which plentifully lieth hid in this Sacrament, as in a fountain. Enlighten alſo my eyes to behold ſo great a myſtery, and ſtrengthen me to believe it with undoubted faith. For it is thy work, and not mans power, thy ſacred inſtitution, not mans invention. For no man is of himſelf able to comprehend and underſtand theſe things, which ſurpaſs the underſtanding even of Angels. What therefore ſhall I unworthy ſinner, duſt and aſhes, be able to ſearch and comprehend of ſo high and ſacred a myſtery?

2. O Lord, in the ſimplicity of my heart, with a good and firm faith, and at thy commandment, I come unto thee with hope and reverence, and do truly believe that thou art preſent in the Sacrament. Thy will is, that I receive thee, and that by love I unite my ſelf unto thee. Wherefore I implore thy mercy, and do crave thy ſpecial grace to the end I may wholly melt and flow over with love unto thee, and hereafter never harbour any external comfort. For this moſt high and worthy Sacrament is the health of the ſoul and body, the remedy of all ſpiritual weakneſs: hereby my vices are cured, my paſſions bridled, temptations

ptations overcome or weakned, greater grace is infused, virtue begun increased, faith confirmed, hope strengthened, and love inflamed and enlarged.

3. For thou hast bestowed, and still oftentimes dost bestow, many benefits in this Sacrament upon thy beloved ones that communicate devoutly, O my God, the Protector of my soul, the strengthner of humane frailty, and the giver of all inward comfort. Thou imparteſt unto them much comfort againſt ſundry tribulations; and lifteſt them up from the depth of their own dejectedneſs, to hope in thy protection; and doſt inwardly refreſh and illuſtrate them with new grace, ſo that they who before Communion felt themſelves heavy and indiſpoſed, afterwards being refreſhed with heavenly meat and drink, do find in themſelves a great change to the better. And in ſuch a way of diſpenſation thou dealeſt with thy elect, that they may truly acknowledge and patiently prove, how great their own infirmity is, and what goodneſs and grace they receive from thee. For they of themſelves are cold, dull and undevout; but by thee they are made fervent, cheerful, and full of devotion. For who is there, that approaching humbly unto the fountain of ſweetneſs, doth not carry away from thence at leaſt ſome little ſweetneſs? Or who ſtanding by a great fire, receiveth not ſome ſmall heat there-

thereby? Thou art a fountain always full and overflowing, a fire ever burning and never decaying.

4. Wherefore if I cannot draw out of the full fountain it ſelf, nor drink my fill; I will notwithſtanding ſet my lips to the mouth of this heavenly conduit, that I may draw from thence at leaſt ſom ſmall drop to refreſh my thirſt; that ſo I may not be wholly dried up. And though I be not altogether heavenly, nor ſo inflamed as the Cherubims and Seraphims, notwithſtanding I will endeavour to apply my ſelf to devotion, and prepare my heart to obtain ſome ſmall ſpark of divine fire, by humble receiving of this enlivening Sacrament. And whatſoever is hereunto wanting in me, good Jeſus, moſt holy Saviour, do thou ſupply for me, moſt bountifully and graciouſly, who haſt vouchſafed to call us unto thee, ſaying, Come unto me all ye that labour and are burdened, and I will refreſh you.

5. I indeed labour in the ſweat of my brows, I am vexed with grief of heart, I am burdened with ſins, I am troubled with temptations, I am intangled and oppreſſed with many evil paſſions; and there is none to help me, none to deliver and ſave me, but thou, O Lord, my Saviour, to whom I commit my ſelf, and all that is mine, that thou maiſt keep me and bring me to life everlaſting. Receive

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me to the honour and glory of thy name, who hast prepared thy Body and Blood to be my meat and drink. Grant, Lord God, my Saviour, that by frequenting thy mysteries, the zeal of my devotion may increase.

CHAP. V.

Of the dignity of this Sacrament, and Ministerial function.

The voyce of Christ.

IF thou hadst Angelical purity, & the sanctity of S. John Baptist, thou wert not worthy to receive this Sacrament. For it is not within the compass of the deserts of men, that man should consecrate the Sacrament of Christ, and receive for food the bread of Angels. A great mystery, and great is the dignity of the Ministers of God, to whom is given that which is not given to the Angels. It is proper for Ministers rightly instituted in the Church, to have power to celebrate, and consecrate the body of Christ. The Priest is the Minister of God, using the word of God, by Gods commandment and appointment; but God is there the principal Author, and invisible Worker; to whom is subject all that he pleaseth, and all that he commandeth doth obey.

2. Thou oughtest therefore more to believe

believe God Almighty in this most excellent Sacrament, than thine own ſenſe, or any viſible ſign. And therefore thou art to come unto this Myſtery with fear and reverence. Conſider attentively with thy ſelf, and ſee what that is, whereof the Miniſtery is delivered unto thee by the impoſition of the hands of the Biſhop. Behold thou art made a Prieſt, and conſecrated to celebrate: ſee now that in due time thou doeſt this faithfully and devoutly, and carry thy ſelf ſo, as thou maiſt be without reproof. Thou haſt not lightned thy burden, but art now bound with a ſtraiter band of diſcipline, and art obliged to a more perfect degree of ſanctity. A Miniſter ought to be adorned with all graces, and to give example of good life to others. His converſation ſhould not be according to the ordinary and common courſe of men, but like to the Angels in heaven, or to perfect men on earth.

3. A Miniſter is the Vicegerent of Chriſt, to pray humbly with a proſtrate mind unto God for himſelf and the whole people. Neither ought he to ceaſe from prayer till he obtain grace and mercy. When a Miniſter doth celebrate, he honoureth God, rejoyceth the Angels, edifieth the Church, helpeth the living; and maketh himſelf partaker of all good.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

An interrogation of the exercise before Communion.

The voice of the Disciple.

WHen I weigh thy worthiness, O Lord, and my unworthiness, I tremble, and am confounded in my self. For if I come not unto thee, I fly from life; and if I unworthily intrude my self, I incur thy displeasure. What therefore shall I do, my God, my helper, and my counseller in necessity?

2. Teach me the right way, appoint me some exercise sutable to this holy Communion. For it is good for me to know how I should reverently and religiously prepare my heart for thee, for the profitable receiving of thy Sacrament, or for the celebrating of so great and divine a Sacrifice.

CHAP. VII.

Of the discussing of our own conscience and purpose of amendment.

The voice of the Beloved.

ABove all things, the Minister of God ought to come to celebrate, and receive this Sacrament with great humility of heart, and lowly reverence, with

with a full faith, and a pious intending of the honour of God. Examine diligently thy conſcience, and to thy power purge and cleanſe it with true contrition and humble confeſſion: ſo as there may be nothing in thee, that may be burdenſome unto thee, or that may breed in thee remorſe of conſcience, and hinder thy free acceſs. Repent thee of all thy ſins in general, and in particular bewail and lament thy daily offences. And if thou haſt time, confeſs unto God in the ſecret of thy heart, all the evils of thy *diſordered* paſſions.

2. Lament and grieve, that thou art yet ſo carnal, ſo worldly, ſo unmortified in thy paſſions, ſo full of the motions of concupiſcence, ſo unwatchfull over thy outward ſenſes, ſo often intangled with many vain fantaſies; ſo vehemently inclined to outward things, ſo negligent in the interiour; ſo prone to laughter and immodeſty, ſo indiſpoſed to tears and compunction; ſo prompt to eaſe and pleaſures of the fleſh, ſo dull to ſtrictneſs and life of zeal; ſo curious to hear news and ſee glorious ſights, ſo ſlack to imbrace what is humble and low; ſo covetous of abundance, ſo niggardly in giving, ſo faſt in keeping; ſo inconſiderate in ſpeech, ſo unbridled to ſilence; ſo looſe in manners, ſo importune in action; ſo greedy to meat, ſo deaf to the word of God; ſo haſty to reſt, ſo ſlow to labour;

labour; so watchful to tales, so drowsie to watch in the service of God, so hasty to the end thereof, so inconstant in attention, so cold in Prayer, so undevout in celebrating, so dry in receiving, so quickly distracted, so seldom wholly gathered into thy self, so suddenly moved to anger, so apt to take displeasure against another, so prone to judge, so severe to reprehend, so joyfull in prosperity, so weak in adversity, so often purposing much good, and yet performing little.

3. These and other thy defects being confessed, and bewailed with sorrow and great dislike of thine own infirmity, make a firm purpose alwayes to amend thy life and to endeavour still after a farther progress in holiness. Then with full resignation, and with thy whole will, do thou to the honour of my name, offer up thy self a perpetual sacrifice on the altar of thy heart, faithfully committing thy body and soul unto me, that so thou mayest come worthily to celebrate this Eucharistical sacrifice, and to receive profitably the Sacrament of my body.

4. For man hath no oblation more worthy, nor greater, for the destroying of sin, than to offer up himself unto God purely and wholly in the holy Communion. And when a man shall have done what lieth in him, and shall be truly penitent, and shall come to me for pardon

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and grace, as I live, ſaith the Lord, who will not the death of a ſinner, but rather that he be converted and live, I will not remember his ſins any more, but they ſhall be all forgiven him.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the oblation of Chriſt on the Croſs and reſignation of our ſelves.

The voice of the Beloved.

AS I willingly offered up my ſelf unto God my Father for thy ſins, my hands being ſtretched forth on the Croſs, and my body naked, ſo that nothing remained in me that was not wholly turned into a ſacrifice for the appeaſing of the divine Majeſty: ſo oughteſt thou alſo to offer up thy ſelf willingly unto me every day, as a pure and holy oblation, with all thy might and affections, in as hearty a manner as thou canſt. What do I require of thee more, than that thou entirely reſign thy ſelf unto me? Whatſoever thou giveſt beſides thy ſelf, is of little account in my ſight, for I ſeek not any gift of thine, but thy ſelf.

2. As it would not ſuffice thee to have all things whatſoever, beſides me; ſo neither can it pleaſe me, whatſoever thou giveſt, if thou offereſt not thy ſelf. Offer up thy ſelf unto me, and give thy ſelf wholly for God, and thy offering ſhall be ac-

acceptable. Behold I offered up my self wholly unto my Father for thee, and gave my whole body and blood for thy food, that I might be wholly thine, and thou remain mine. But if thou abidest in thy self, and dost not offer thy self up freely unto my will; thy oblation is not entire, neither will the union between us be perfect. Therefore a free offering up of thy self into the hands of God, ought to go before all thy actions, if thou wilt obtain freedom and grace. For this cause so few become inwardly free and illuminated, for that they are loth wholly to deny themselves. My saying is undoubtedly true, *unless a man forsake all, he cannot be my Disciple.* If thou therefore desirest to be my Disciple, offer up thy self unto me with thy whole affections.

CHAP. IX.

That we ought to offer up our selves, and all that is ours unto God, and to pray for all.

The voice of the Disciple.

THine, O Lord, are all things that are in heaven, and in earth. I desire to offer up my self unto thee, as a free oblation, and to remain always thine. O Lord, in the simplicity of my heart I offer my self unto thee this day, for a sacri-

ſacrifice of a perpetual praiſe to be thy ſervant for ever. Receive me with this holy oblation of thy precious body; and may this be for my good and the good of all thy people.

2. I offer unto thee, O Lord, all my ſins and offences, which I have committed before thee and thy holy Angels, from the day wherein I firſt could ſin, to this hour, upon thy merciful altar; that thou maiſt conſume and burn them all with the fire of thy love, and waſh out all the ſtains of my ſins, and cleanſe my conſcience from all offences, and reſtore to me again thy grace, which I loſt by ſin, forgiving me all my offences, and receiving me mercifully to the kiſs of peace.

3. What can I do with my ſins, but humbly confeſs and bewail them, and intreat always thy favour? I beſeech thee, hear me graciouſly, when I ſtand before thee my God. All my ſins are very diſpleaſing unto me. I will never commit them any more; but I bewail, and will bewail them as long as I live, and am purpoſed to repent, and according to my utmoſt power to pleaſe thee. Forgive me, O God, forgive me my ſins for thy holy names ſake: ſave my ſoul which thou haſt redeemed with thy moſt precious blood. Behold I commit my ſelf unto thy mercy, I reſign my ſelf over into thy hands. Do with me according to

thy goodness, not according to my wickedness and iniquity.

4. I offer up also unto thee all whatsoever is good in me, although it be very little and imperfect, that thou maist amend and sanctify it, that thou maist make it grateful and acceptable unto thee, and always perfect it more and more: and bring me also, who am a slothfull and unprofitable creature, to a good and blessed end.

5. I offer up also unto thee all the godly desires of pious persons, the necessities of parents, friends, brethren, sisters, and of all those that are dear unto me, and that have done good either to my self or to others for thy love, and that have desired and beg'd of me to pray for them and all theirs: that they all may receive the help of thy grace and comfort, protection from dangers, deliverance from pain; and being freed from all evils, may joyfully give worthy thanks unto thee.

6. I offer up also unto thee my prayers, especially for them who have in any thing wronged, grieved, or slandered me, or have done me any damage or displeasure: and for those also, whom I have at any time sadded, troubled, grieved, and scandalized by words or deeds, wittingly or at unawares, that it may please thee to forgive us all our sins and offences, one against another. Take,

O Lord,

O Lord, from our hearts all jealouſie, indignation, wrath, and contention, and whatſoever may hurt charity, and leſſen brotherly love. Have mercy, O Lord, have mercy on thoſe that crave thy mercy; give grace unto them that ſtand in need thereof, and grant that we may be counted worthy to enjoy thy grace, and attain to life everlaſting. Amen.

CHAP. X.

That the holy communion is not lightly to be forborn.

The voice of the Beloved.

THou oughteſt often to have recourſe to the Fountain of grace and of divine mercy, to the Fountain of goodneſs and of all benignity; that thou maiſt be healed of thy ſins and paſſions, and be made more ſtrong and vigilant againſt all the temptations & deceits of the Devil. The enemy knowing the great good and advantage which comes by the holy Communion, endeavoureth by all means and occaſions to withdraw and hinder faithful and pious perſons from it.

2. Some when they purpoſe to fit themſelves for the holy Communion, ſuffer worſe aſſaults of the Devil. For that wicked ſpirit (as it is written in Job) cometh amongſt the Sons of God, to

trouble them according to his accuſtomed malice, or to make them over fearfull and perplexed, that ſo he may diminiſh their affection, or by ſubtile aſſaults take away their faith, to the end they may either altogether forbear the Communion, or at leaſt come unto it but coldly. But there is no heed to be taken of his frauds and ſuggeſtions, be they never ſo filthy and hideous, but all is to be turned back upon his own head. Thou oughteſt to contemn and ſcorn him a miſerable wretch, and not to omit the holy Communion for his aſſaults, and the troubles which he raiſeth.

3. Oftentimes alſo an exceſſive care for the obtaining ſuch a degree of devotion, and ſome anxiety about confeſſing thy ſins hindereth thee. Follow herein the counſel of the wiſe, and put away all doubts and ſcruple; for it is an hinderance to the grace of God, and prejudiceth the devotion of the mind. For every ſmall vexation and trouble omit not the holy Communion, but the ſooner confeſs thy ſins, and willingly forgive others whatſoever offences they have done againſt thee; and if thou haſt offended any, humbly crave pardon, and God will readily forgive thee.

4. What availeth it to delay long the confeſſion of thy ſins, or to deferr the holy

holy Communion? Purge thy ſelf with ſpeed, ſpit out the venome preſently, make haſte to apply this ſovereign remedy, and thou ſhalt find it to be better with thee, than if thou deferredſt it long. If thou omitteſt it to day for this cauſe, perhaps to morrow ſome greater will fall out; and ſo thou maiſt be hindred a long time from the Communion, and become more unfit. With all poſſible ſpeed ſhake off from thy ſelf all preſent heavineſs and ſloth, for it will not avail thee to continue long in diſquietneſs and trouble of mind, and for daily occurring impediments to withdraw thy ſelf from the divine myſteries. Yea it is very prejudicial to deferr the Communion long, for this uſually cauſeth a greater dulneſs and undiſpoſedneſs. Alas, ſome cold and diſſolute people do willingly delay confeſſion and deferre the ſacred Communion, leſt they ſhould be engaged to the greater watch over themſelves.

5. O how little is their charity and how weak is their devotion, that ſo eaſily omit the holy Communion! How happy is he and acceptable to God, who ſo ordereth his life, and keepeth his conſcience in ſuch purity, that he is ready and fit to communicate every day, if it were convenient and might be done without others taking notice. If one doth ſometimes abſtain out of humility, or by reaſon of ſome lawful impedi-

ment, he is to be commended for the reverence which therein he sheweth. But if it proceedeth of dull slothfulness, he must stir himself up, and do what lieth in him, and God will assist his desire for the good will he hath thereto, which God doth chiefly respect.

6. And when any lawfull hinderance doth happen, he must yet always have that good will, and a pious intention to communicate, and so shall he not lose the fruit of the Sacrament. For every good man may every day and hour profitably and without let receive Christ spiritually: and yet on certain days, and at time appointed he ought to receive Sacramentally with an affectionate reverence the body of his Redeemer, and rather seek the honour and glory of God, than his own comfort. For he communicateth mystically and invisibly, as often as he devoutly calleth to mind the mystery of the Incarnation, and the Passion of Christ, and is inflamed with his love.

7. He that prepareth not himself, but when a Festival draweth near, and when custome compelleth him thereunto, shall usually be found to be unprepared for it. Blessed is he that offereth himself up as a Sacrifice to the Lord, as often as he doth celebrate or communicate. Be not too long, nor too short in celebrating, but keep the accustomed man-

manner of thoſe with whom thou liveſt. Thou oughteſt not to be tedious and troubleſome to others, but to obſerve the received cuſtome, according to the appointment of thy Superiours: and rather frame thy ſelf to the profit of others, than to thine own devotion or deſire.

CHAP. XI.

That the Body of Chriſt, and the holy Scriptures, are moſt neceſſary unto a faithful ſoul.

The voice of the Diſciple.

O Sweeteſt Lord Jeſus, how great ſweetneſs hath an holy ſoul that feaſteth with thee in thy banquet, where there is ſet no other food to be eaten but thy ſelf, her only beloved, and moſt to be deſired above all the deſires of her heart! And verily it ſhould be a ſweet thing unto me to pour out tears from the very bottom of my heart in thy preſence: and with holy Magdalene to waſh thy feet with my tears. But where is this devotion? Where is there any ſo plentiful ſhedding of holy tears. Surely in the ſight of thee and thy holy Angels, my whole heart ſhould be inflamed and even weep for joy. For I enjoy thee in the Sacrament truly preſent, though hidden under another repreſentation.

2. For to behold thee in thine own

divine brightneſs, mine eyes would not be able to endure it, neither could the whole world ſtand in the brightneſs of the glory of thy Majeſty. I do really enjoy and adore him, whom the Angels adore in heaven; but I, as yet in the mean time, by faith, they by ſight, and without a veil. I ought to be content with the light of true faith, and to walk therein, untill the day of everlaſting brightneſs break forth, and the ſhadows of figures paſs away. But when that ſhall come which is perfect, the uſe of Sacraments ſhall ceaſe: For the bleſſed in heavenly glory need not any Sacramentall remedy, but rejoyce without end in the preſence of God, beholding his glory face to face, and being transformed from glory to glory into the Image of the incomprehenſible Deity, they taſte the word of God made fleſh, as he was from the beginning; and as he remaineth for ever.

3. Whileſt I mind theſe wonderfull things, even all ſpiritual comfort whatſoever becometh tedious unto me: for that as long as I behold not my Lord openly in his glory, I make no account at all of whatſoever I ſee or hear in this world. Thou art my witneſs, O God, that nothing can comfort me, no creature can give me reſt, but thou my God, whom I deſire to behold everlaſtingly. But this is not poſſible whileſt I remain in this

this mortal life. Therefore I muſt frame my ſelf to much patience, and ſubmit my ſelf to thee in all my deſires. For thy Saints alſo, O Lord, who now rejoyce with thee in the Kingdom of heaven, whilſt they lived, expected in faith and great patience the coming of thy glory. What they believed, I believe: what they hoped for, I alſo hope for: whither they are come, I truſt I ſhall come by thy grace. In the mean time I will go forward in faith, ſtrengthened by the examples of the Saints: I have alſo godly books for my comfort and for the glaſs of my life, and above all theſe, thy moſt holy body for a ſingular remedy and refuge.

4. For I perceive two things to be chiefly neceſſary for me in this life without which this miſerable life would be unſupportable unto me. Whilſt I am kept in the priſon of this body, I acknowledge my ſelf to ſtand in need of two things, to wit, food, and light. Thou haſt therefore given unto me a weak creature, thy ſacred Body for the nouriſhment of my ſoul and body; and thou haſt ſet thy word as a light unto my feet: without theſe two I could not well live. For the word of God is the light of the ſoul, and thy Sacrament, the bread of life. Theſe alſo may be called the two tables ſet on the one ſide and the other, in the ſtore-houſe of the holy Church.

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One is the holy table having the holy bread, that is, the precious body of Christ: the other is that of the divine law containing holy doctrine, teaching the true faith, and certainly leading to that within the veil, where is the Holy of Holies. Thanks be unto thee Lord Jesus, the light of everlasting light, for the table of holy doctrine, which thou hast afforded us by thy servants, the Prophets and Apostles and other Teachers.

5. Thanks be unto thee, Creatour and Redeemer of man, who to manifest thy love to the whole world, hast prepared a great supper wherein thou hast set before us to be eaten (not the typical Lamb, but) thine own most sacred Body and Blood, rejoycing all the faithfull with thy holy banquet, and replenishing them to the full with thy cup of salvation, in which are all the delights of Paradise; and the holy Angels do feast with us, but yet with a more happy sweetness.

6. O how great and honourable is the office of Gods Ministers, to whom it is given with sacred words to consecrate (the Sacrament of) the Lord of glory; with their lips to bless, with their hands to hold, with their mouth to receive, and also to administer to others! O how clean ought to be those hands, how pure that mouth, how holy that body, how spotted that heart, where the Author of purity so often entreth! Nothiog but what

what is holy, no word but good and profitable ought to proceed from his mouth, which ſo often receiveth the Sacrament of Chriſt.

7. Simple and chaſt ought to be the eyes that uſe to behold the body of Chriſt; the hands pure and lifted up to heaven, that uſe to receive the Creatour of heaven and earth. Unto the Prieſts eſpecially it is ſaid in the law, be ye holy for that I your Lord God am holy.

8. Aſſiſt us, Almighty God, with thy grace, that we who have undertaken the office of Prieſthood, may ſerve thee worthily and devoutly in all purity, and with a good conſcience. And if we live not in ſo great innocency as we ought to do, grant us notwithſtanding in due manner to bewail the ſins which we have committed; and in the ſpirit of humility and with the full purpoſe of a good will to ſerve thee hereafter more fervently.

CHAP. XII.

That he who is to communicate ought to prepare himſelf with great diligence.

The voice of the Beloved.

I Am the lover of purity, and the give, of all ſanctity. I ſeek a pure heart, and there is the place of my reſt. Make ready and adorn for me the great chamber,

chamber, and I will keep with thee the Paſſeover amongſt my Diſciples. If thou wilt have me come unto thee, and remain with thee; purge out the old leaven, and make clean the habitation of thy heart: ſhut out the whole world, and all the throng of ſins: ſit like a ſparrow ſolitary upon the houſe-top, and think of thy offences in the bitterneſs of thy ſoul. For every lover prepareth the beſt and faireſt room for his beloved: and herein is known the affection of him that entertaineth his beloved.

2. Know thou notwithſtanding, that the merit of no action of thine is able to make this preparation ſufficient, although thou ſhouldeſt prepare thy ſelf a whole year together, and think on nothing elſe. Thou art of my mere grace and favour ſuffered to come to my table, like a beggar invited to dinner to a rich man, who hath nothing elſe to return him for his benefits, but to humble himſelf and give him thanks. Do what lieth in thee, and do it diligently; not for cuſtome, not for neceſſity, but with fear and reverence, and affection; receive the body of thy beloved Lord God, who vouchſafeſt to come unto thee. I am he that have called thee, I have commanded it to be done, I will ſupply what is wanting in thee: come and receive me.

3. When I beſtow the grace of devotion,

tion, give thanks to thy God; for it is given thee, not for that thou art worthy, but becauſe I have mercy on thee. If thou have it not, but rather doſt feel thy ſelf dry; continue in prayer, ſigh and knock, and give not over untill thou art meet to receive ſome crum or drop of ſaving grace. Thou haſt need of me, not I of thee, neither comeſt thou to ſanctifie me, but I come to ſanctifie and make thee better. Thou comeſt that thou maiſt be ſanctified by me, and united unto me, that thou maiſt receive new grace, and be ſtirred up again to amendment. Neglect not this grace, but prepare thy heart with all diligence, and receive thy beloved into thy ſoul.

4. But thou oughteſt not only to prepare thy ſelf to devotion before Communion, but carefully alſo to conſerve thy ſelf therein, after thou haſt received the Sacrament. Neither is the carefull guard of thy ſelf afterwards leſs required, than devout preparation before. For a good guard afterwards, is the beſt preparation again for the obtaining of greater grace; becauſe that a man becometh therefore very indiſpoſed, if he preſently pour himſelf out overmuch to outward comforts. Beware of much talk, remain in ſome ſecret place, and enjoy thy God. For thou haſt him, whom all the world cannot take from thee. I am he, to whom thou oughteſt wholly to give

give thy ſeed, that ſo thou maiſt live hereafter, not in thy ſelf, but in me, without all ſolicitude.

CHAP. XIII.

That a devout ſoul ought to deſire with her whole heart, to be united unto Chriſt in the Sacrament.

The voice of the Diſciple.

HOw may I obtain this, O Lord, that I may find thee alone, and open my whole heart unto thee, and enjoy thee as my ſoul deſireth? And that no man may look towards me, nor any creature move me or eye me, but thou alone maiſt ſpeak unto me, and I to thee, as the beloved is wont to ſpeak to his beloved, and a friend to banquet with his friend? This I pray for, this I deſire that I may be wholly united unto thee, and may withdraw my heart from all created things, and more and more by ſacred Communion and often celebrating, learn to reliſh heavenly and eternal things. O Lord God, when ſhall I be wholly united to thee, and abſorpt by thee, and be altogether forgetful of my ſelf? Thou in me, and I in thee, and ſo grant us both to continue in one.

2. Thou art truly my beloved, the choiceſt among thouſands, in whom my ſoul is well pleaſed to dwell all the days of

of her life. Thou art indeed my peace-maker, in whom is greateſt peace and true reſt, without whom is labour and ſorrow and infinite miſery. Thou art indeed a God that hideſt thy ſelf, and thy counſel is not with the wicked, but thy ſpeech is with the humble and ſimple of heart. O Lord, how ſweet is thy ſpirit, who to the end thou mighteſt ſhew thy ſweetneſs towards thy children, vouchſafeſt to feed them with the bread which deſcendeth from heaven, and is full of all ſweetneſs? Surely there is no other Nation ſo great, that hath God nigh unto them, as thou our God art preſent to all thy faithful ones, unto whom for their daily comfort, and for the raiſing up of their hearts to heaven, thou giveſt thy ſelf to be eaten and enjoyed.

3. For what other Nation is there ſo famous, as the Chriſtian people? or what creature under heaven ſo beloved, as a religious ſoul to whom God himſelf cometh to feed her with his glorious fleſh? O unſpeakable grace! O admirable condeſcent! O infinite love ſingularly beſtowed upon man! But what ſhall I give unto the Lord in return of his grace, for ſo eminent an expreſſion of thy love? There is no other thing more acceptable that I am able to give, than to give my heart wholly to my God, and to unite it moſt inwardly unto him. Then

ſhall

ſhall all my inward parts rejoyce, when my ſoul ſhall be perfectly united unto God. Then he will ſay unto me; if thou wilt be with me, I will be with thee. And I will anſwer him, Vouchſafe, O Lord, to remain with me, and I will gladly be with thee. This is my whole deſire, that my heart be united unto thee.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the fervent deſire of ſome devout Perſons, to receive the Body of Chriſt.

The voice of the Diſciple.

O How great is thy goodneſs, O Lord, which thou haſt laid up for them that fear thee! When I remember ſome devout perſons who come unto thy Sacrament, O Lord, with greateſt devotion and affection, I am oftentimes confounded and bluſh within my ſelf, that I come ſo formally and coldly to thy table of the holy Communion, that I remain ſo dry, and without heart affection, That I am not wholly inflamed in thy preſence, my God, nor ſo earneſtly drawn and affected, as many devout perſons have been, who out of a vehement deſire of the Communion, and a feeling affection of heart, could not contain themſelves from weeping; but

but with the desire both of soul and body, they earnestly longed after thee, O God the living Fountain, being not otherwise able to allay nor satisfie their hunger, but by receiving thy body with all joy and spiritual greediness.

2. O the most ardent faith of those persons! a clear argument of thy sacred presence. For they truly know their Lord in the breaking of bread, whose heart burneth so mightily within them, whilst thou, O blessed Jesus, conversest with them. Such desire and devotion, so vehement love and fervency, is oftentimes far from me. Be merciful unto me good Jesus, sweet and gracious Lord, and grant me thy poor needy creature, to feel sometimes, at least in this holy Communion, somewhat of thy hearty affectionate love, that my faith may be more strengthened, my hope in thy goodness increased, and that my charity once perfectly enflamed, after the tasting of heavenly Manna, may never decay.

3. Thy mercy, O Lord, is able to give me the grace I desire, and to visit me most mercifully with the spirit of fervour, when it shall please thee. For although I burn not with so great desire as those that are so singularly devoted to thee: yet notwithstanding by thy grace, I desire to have this great inflamed desire, praying and craving that I may participate

ticipate with all such thy fervent lovers, and be numbred among them in their holy company.

CHAP. XV.

That the grace of devotion is obtained by humility and denial of our selves.

The voice of the Beloved.

THou oughtest to seek the grace of devotion instantly, to ask it earnestly, to expect it patiently and with confidence to receive it gratefully, to keep it humbly, to work with it diligently, and to commit the term and manner of this heavenly visitation to God, untill it shall please him to come unto thee. Thou oughtest chiefly to humble thy self, when thou feelest inwardly little or no devotion, and yet not to be too much dejected, nor to grieve inordinately. God often giveth in a short moment, that which he hath long time denyed: he giveth sometimes in the end that which in the beginning of prayer he deferred to grant.

2. If grace should be always presently given, and at hand ever with a wish, the weak man could not well bear it. Therefore the grace of devotion is to be expected with good hope and humble patience; yet impute it to thy self and thy sins, when it is not given thee, or when it is

is ſecretly taken away. It is ſometimes a ſmall matter that hindereth and hideth grace *from us*, if yet it be to be called ſmall, and not rather a great matter, that hindereth ſo great a good. And if thou remove this, be it great or ſmall, and perfectly overcome it, thou ſhalt have thy deſire.

3. For preſently as ſoon as thou from thy whole heart giveſt thy ſelf to God, and ſeekeſt not this nor that, for thine own pleaſure or will, but ſettleſt thy ſelf wholly in him, thou ſhalt find thy ſelf united and quiet: for nothing will reliſh ſo well, and pleaſe thee ſo much, as the good pleaſure of the divine will. Whoſoever therefore, with a ſingle heart lifteth up his intention to God, and purgeth himſelf from all inordinate love or diſlike of any created thing, he ſhall be the moſt fit to receive grace, and meet for the gift of devotion. For the Lord beſtoweth his bleſſings there, where he findeth the veſſels empty. And how much the more perfectly one forſaketh theſe low things, and the more he dieth to himſelf by contempt of himſelf: ſo much the more ſpeedily grace ſhall come, and enter in more plentifully, and raiſe up higher the heart that is thus free.

4. Then ſhall he ſee, and be filled, and wonder, and his heart ſhall be enlarged within him, becauſe the hand of the

the Lord is with him, & he hath put himself wholly into his hands for ever. Behold, so shall the man be blessed, that seeketh God with his whole heart, and busieth not his soul in vain. This man obtaineth the great favour of divine union, in receiving the holy Eucharist; for that he respecteth not his own devotion and comfort, but above all devotion and comfort, the honour and glory of God.

CHAP. XVI.

That we ought to manifest our necessities to Christ, and crave his grace.

The voice of the Disciple.

O Most sweet, and loving Lord whom I now desire to receive with all devotion, thou knowest my infirmity, and the necessity which I endure, with how many sins and evils I am oppressed, how often I am grieved, tempted, troubled, and defiled. I come unto thee for remedy, I crave of thee comfort and succour; I speak to him that knoweth all things, to whom all my inward parts are open, and who can only perfectly comfort and help me. Thou knowest what good things I stand in most need of, and how poor I am in vertues.

2. Behold, I stand before thee poor and

and naked, calling for grace, and craving mercy. Refresh thy hungry beggar, inflame my coldness with the fire of thy love: inlighten my blindness with the brightness of thy presence. Turn all earthly things to me into bitterness, all things grievous and cross into patience, all low and created things into contempt and oblivion. Lift up my heart to thee in heaven, and suffer me not to wander upon earth. Be thou only sweet unto me from henceforth for evermore: for thou only art my meat and my drink, my love and my joy, my sweetness and all my good.

3. O that with thy presence thou wouldst wholly inflame, burn and conform me unto thy self; that I might be made one spirit with thee by the grace of inward union, and by the meltings of ardent love! Suffer me not to go from thee hungry and dry, but deal mercifully with me, as thou hast oftentimes dealt wonderfully with thy Saints. What marvel is it if I should be wholly inflamed by thee, and die from my self, sith thou art fire always burning and never decaying, love purifying the heart, and enlightning the understanding?

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

Of fervent love and vehement desire to receive Christ.

The voice of the Disciple,

WIth great devotion and ardent love, with most hearty affection and fervour I desire to receive thee, O Lord, as many Saints and devout persons have desired thee, when they received thy Sacrament who were most pleasing unto thee in holiness of life, and most fervent in devotion. O my God, my everlasting love; my whole good, my happiness without end. I would gladly receive thee with the most vehement desire, and most worthy reverence, that any of the Saints ever had, or could feel.

2. And although I be unworthy to have all those feelings of devotion, yet I offer unto thee the whole affection of my heart, as if I alone had all those highly pleasing inflamed desires: yea, and whatsoever also an holy mind can conceive and desire; all that, with greatest reverence and most inward affection, I offer and present unto thee. I desire to reserve nothing to my self, but freely and most willingly to sacrifice my self and all mine unto thee, my Lord God my Creatour, and my Redeemer. I desire to receive thee this day with such affection,

affection, reverence, praiſe and honour, with ſuch gratitude, worthineſs and love, with ſuch faith, hope, and purity, as thy moſt holy Mother the glorious Virgin Mary received, and deſired thee, when ſhe humbly and devoutly anſwered the Angel, who declared unto her the myſtery of the Incarnation, and ſaid, *Behold the hand-maid of the Lord, let it be done unto me according to thy word.*

3. And as thy bleſſed Fore-runner, the moſt excellent amongſt the Saints, John Baptiſt, chearfully leaped by reaſon of the holy Ghoſt, whileſt he was yet ſhut up in his mothers womb; and afterwards ſeeing Jeſus walking amongſt men, humbling himſelf very much, ſaid with devout affection, *The friend of the Bridegroom that ſtandeth and heareth him, rejoyceth with joy for the voice of the Bridegroom:* ſo I alſo wiſh to be inflamed with great and holy deſires, and to offer my ſelf up to thee with my whole heart. Wherefore I offer alſo and preſent unto thee the joys, fervent affections, mental exceſſes, and ſupernal illuminations, and heavenly viſions of all devout hearts, with all the vertues and praiſes celebrated and to be celebrated by all creatures in heaven and earth, for my ſelf, and all ſuch as are commended to me in prayer, that by all thou maiſt be worthily praiſed and glorified for ever.

4. Receive, my Lord God, my wiſhes

and desires of giving thee infinite prai[se] and thanks, which according to the me[a]sure of thy unspeakable greatness, a[re] most worthily due unto thee. These I yield thee, and desire to yield thee ever[y] day and moment. I do entreat and in[-]vite all heavenly minds and all thy de[-]vout servants, to give thanks and praise together with me.

5. Let all People, Tribes, and Tongues praise thee, and magnifie thy holy and sweet name, with great joy and fervent devotion; and let all that reverently and devoutly celebrate thy most high Sacrament and receive it with full faith, find grace and mercy at thy hands, and pray humbly for me a sinful creature. And when they shall have obtained their desired devotion and joyful union, and depart from thy sacred heavenly Table, well comforted and marvellously refreshed, let them vouchsafe to remember my poor soul.

CHAP. XVIII.

That man be not a curious searcher of the Sacrament, but an humble follower of Christ submitting his sense to faith.

The voice of the Beloved.

THOU oughtest to beware of curious and unprofitable searching into this most profound Sacrament, if thou wilt not be plunged in the depths of doubts. He that is a searcher of Majesty, shall be oppressed by thy glory. God is able

able to work more than man can understand. A pious & humble inquiry of truth is tolerable, so it be always ready to be taught, and do endeavour to walk in the sound doctrines of the Fathers.

2. Blessed is that simplicity, that forsaketh the difficult ways of questions, and goeth on in the plain and assured path of Gods Commandments. Many have lost devotion, whilest they would search after high things. Faith and a sincere life is required at thy hands, not height of understanding, nor a diving deep into the mysteries of God. If thou dost not understand, nor conceive those things that are under thee, how shalt thou be able to comprehend those that are above thee? Submit thy self to God, and let thy sense be subject to faith; and the light of knowledge shall be given thee in that degree as shall be profitable and necessary for thee.

3. Some are grievously tempted about faith and the Sacrament, but this is not to be imputed to them, but rather to the Enemy. Be not thou anxious nor dispute with thy thoughts, neither do thou give answer to the doubts cast in by the Devil; but believe the words of God, believe his Saints and Prophets, and the wicked Enemy will fly from thee. It is oftentimes very profitable to the servant of God to suffer such things. For the Devil tempteth not unbelievers and sinners, whom

...he already ſecurely poſſeſſeth, ...he ſundry ways tempteth and vexeth the faithful and religious.

4. Go forward therefore with a ſincere and undoubted faith, and come to the Sacrament with unfeigned reverence. And whatſoever thou art not able to underſtand, commit ſecurely to Almighty God. God deceiveth thee not; he is deceived that truſteth too much to himſelf. God walketh with the ſimple, revealeth himſelf to the humble, giveth underſtanding to the little ones, openeth the ſenſe to pure minds, and hideth grace from the curious and proud. Humane reaſon is weak, and may be deceived, but true faith cannot be deceived.

5. All reaſon and natural ſearch ought to follow faith, not to go before it, nor infringe it. For faith and love do here chiefly excel, and work in a hidden manner in this moſt holy and excellent Sacrament. God, who is everlaſting and of infinite power, doth great and inſcrutable things in heaven and in earth, and there is no ſearching out of his wonderfull works. If the works of God were ſuch, as might be eaſily comprehended by humane reaſon, they were not to be called wonderful and unſpeakable.

FINIS.